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ABSTRACT

Besides describing actual experiences of rural students who leave school before completing Year 12, a 1978-79 study in Western Australia was also designed to investigate options and employment opportunities available to school leavers. Questionnaires from 1,371 students in Years 9-12 in 14 schools collected data on background, education, aspirations and expectations. Six months later, students (256) identified as school leavers returned mailed questionnaires on their post-school experiences; 12 of the original students (employed, unemployed, or re-enrolled in school) were interviewed for case studies. Findings were: rural school leavers wanted to remain in country areas and were keen to get jobs; girls faced a more difficult situation than boys when leaving rural schools to seek work; substantial numbers of school leavers were disenchanted with school; information provided by schools on careers and on the transition from school to work may be inadequate; students from rural schools either sought work locally, moved to larger population centers to find jobs, or continued their studies; rural students found jobs in distinctive ways (direct contact and family associations); job opportunities were very restricted in rural areas. Recommendations included: considering the situation of female school leavers; reviewing rural secondary schools and schools' transition activities; further research. (MH)

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STUDIES IN RURAL EDUCATION NO. 5

COUNTRY SCHOOL LEAVERS

A study of the aspirations and experiences of school leavers from fourteen country schools in Western Australia

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RESEARCH BRANCH

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

August, 1980

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CONTENTS

		Page
	FOREWORD	
1.	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Context of the study	1
	1.2 Aim of the study	3
2.	DESIGN OF THE STUDY	
	2.1 Selection of the study regions	4
	2.2 Background descriptions of the regions	6
	2.3 Initial survey	6
	2.4 Identifying the school leavers	7
	2.5 Follow-up survey	7
	2.6 Case studies	8
3.	THE STUDY REGIONS	
	3.1 The Outer Wheatbelt	9
	3.2 The South-West	14
	3.3 The Pilbara	19
4.	CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS	
	4.1 Personal and family circumstances	25
	4.2 Education aspirations and experiences	27
	4.3 Occupational aspirations	28
	4.4 Personal (non-occupational) aspirations	32
	4.5 Reactions to rural life	33
5.	LEAVING SCHOOL IN RURAL AREAS	
	5.1 Economic conditions in rural centres and areas	35
	5.2 Desire to remain in rural areas	38
	5.3 Desire to work and the means of attaining it	41
	5.4 School preparation of students for work	44
	5.5 School performance of the leavers	47
	5.6 Reasons for leaving school	49
	5.7 Different situations of male and female leavers	52
	5.8 Regional influences	55
	5.9 Conclusion	57
6.	CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION	
	6.1 Conclusions	58
	6.2 Possible courses of action	63
	REFERENCES	67
APPENDIX	A. BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDY AREAS	69
	B. SURVEY OF POTENTIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS	73
	C. SURVEY OF SCHOOL LEAVERS	84

FOREWORD

Employment opportunities for school leavers is a topic which has assumed major importance for the Education Department in recent times. New policies and programmes are being developed in the area of transition from school to work. While statistics relating to job opportunities and levels of unemployment are receiving attention, much still needs to be known about the aspirations of potential school leavers and their attempts to enter the workforce. This is particularly the case for rural youth who are too easily assumed by policy makers to have similar expectations and opportunities to their urban counterparts. Hence, this study is particularly opportune.

I would like to acknowledge the very useful assistance of the Tasmanian and Queensland Departments of Education. The high level of co-operation that occurred between Departments has been most gratifying. It seems evident that there is much to be gained from the joint participation of Education Departments in research projects which address issues of common interest.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr Dunnell and other Research Branch staff who participated in the project. The report should serve as a very useful contribution to the Department's current initiatives in rural education.

D. Mossenson

DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF EDUCATION

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the Study

The concept of educational disadvantage gained increasing exposure in overseas countries during the 1950s and 1960s. In Australia, the first example of action taken at the national level was the Schools Commission's Disadvantaged Schools Program. This arose from the Commonwealth Government's acceptance of the recommendation of the Interim Committee for the Schools Commission (1973, p.105) that such a programme be initiated. This programme focused on schools which had relatively large proportions of their enrolments drawn from socially and economically disadvantaged areas. These schools were mainly located in urban areas.

The Disadvantaged Schools Program served the valuable function of focusing attention on disadvantage and its relationship to education. Some of the interest raised by the Program was directed at disadvantages experienced by students in rural areas and the problems of rural schools and rural students began to attract more attention.

One outcome of this increased attention was the suggestion by the Schools Commission in its report for the 1976-8 triennium (1975, pp.73-81), that a wide-ranging discussion of country education take place. The Commission also proposed an extensive programme of activities to improve education in rural areas. These proposals emerged in 1977 as the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program. Essentially, this Program recognized that some of the difficulties of providing education in rural areas, and some of the disadvantages experienced by rural students could not be addressed effectively through the Disadvantaged Schools Program. Through the new programme teachers, parents and community agencies were to be given opportunities to review their needs and resources with the aim of planning and initiating activities designed to alleviate the difficulties they were experiencing.

During 1977, a number of the proposals for action were developed which focused on the problem of increasing unemployment among school leavers in rural areas. People in rural areas were beginning to regard the employment opportunities available to their local youth as a matter of concern. Studies undertaken in Queensland (McGaw, 1977) and Tasmania (Behrens, 1978) as a part of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty and a study of the Huon Valley region of Tasmania (Education Department of Tasmania, 1978) all pointed to restricted employment opportunities for youth as being a characteristic of rural areas.

As a result of its studies, the Education Department of Tasmania conducted a national conference on rural education in Launceston in June, 1977. At this meeting it was agreed that the problems of children leaving rural schools to seek employment should be one major focus in a co-ordinated and concerted programme of research into rural education. At subsequent meetings, held in Adelaide and Canberra, the details of such a study were outlined.

It was proposed that a national study be undertaken, involving all of the States and Territories. However, for a variety of reasons only Tasmania, Queensland and Western Australia ultimately participated. Tasmania had a long history of interest and research in the educational needs of country areas and both Tasmania and Queensland had undertaken research in country areas under the auspices of the Commission of Inquiry into Poverty. During 1976, Western Australia had become involved in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) study of basic education provision in sparsely populated areas. These commitments and interests led the three Education Departments to undertake this study.

It was agreed that the aims of the study would be the same and each State would produce its own report but that there would be a national report which would concentrate on the similarities and differences between the situations in each State. This is the report of the study undertaken in Western Australia. It refers only to data collected in Western Australia and its conclusions refer principally to this State. For information about the other States, readers are referred to the national report which will be available shortly.

1.2 Aim of the Country School Leavers' Study

The planning meeting in Canberra in June, 1978, agreed that this study would address the following question: 'What happens to school leavers in rural areas of Australia and how can their perceived options and actual opportunities be enhanced?'.

Within this research question the following terms were defined:

School leavers - all students enrolled in years 9 to 12 who terminate their enrolment in nominated schools during the period from the end of third term 1978 until the end of first term 1979.

Rural areas - any designated area of a State which does not contain a town with a population of over 20 000.

Options - the range of occupational choices perceived to be available by the students.

Opportunities - the range of occupational choices actually available as determined by the study.

The study was intended to describe the actual experiences of the school leavers. Perhaps more importantly, it was also seen as being policy and action-oriented in that it would draw conclusions and make suggestions for increasing the options and opportunities available to country school leavers.

The next chapter outlines the design and methodology of the study. Chapter 3 describes the three regions selected for inclusion in the study. Chapter 4 describes the characteristics and attitudes of the sample as determined by their responses to the initial questionnaire. Chapter 5 contains a discussion of the major issues surrounding leaving school in country areas. It uses data from both questionnaire surveys and from the case studies. The final chapter draws conclusions from the study and makes suggestions about future action.

2. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

To identify the opportunities and options available to rural school leavers in Western Australia it was decided to select three rural areas and conduct surveys and interviews with as many of the leavers as possible. Accordingly, the following timetable of activities was drawn up:

July-October 1978	- Plan survey instruments Select study areas
November 1978	- Survey the potential school leavers Commence region descriptions
January-March 1979	- Analyse data Identify school leavers
April-May 1979	- Survey the actual school leavers Plan case studies Identify case study subjects
June-July 1979	- Undertake case studies Complete region descriptions
August-December 1979	- Analyse data Transcribe case study interviews
January-June 1980	- Write up report

2.1 Selection of the study regions

It was agreed that three country regions would be included in this study. The following criteria were to apply in the selection:

The areas selected should comply with the definition 'rural' outlined in section 1.2

The areas should have varying degrees of isolation from major population centres.

At least one of the areas should be involved in the Disadvantaged Country Areas Program (now called the Priority Country Schools Program) so that any effects of this program could be considered.

The areas should have different economic bases and different histories in terms of the employment opportunities they offered.

The school enrolments in each area should provide between 150 and 400 students in each of the school years applicable to this study.

The three areas selected for this study have been called 'South-West', 'Outer Wheatbelt' and 'Pilbara'. Outlines of the three areas will be given here but more complete descriptions are contained in Chapter 3.

The title 'Outer Wheatbelt' is used to describe a series of areas which do not really constitute a single region. The areas are those included in the Priority Country Schools Program under the same name. Each is based on the small towns of Mukinbudin (located 300 kms east of Perth), Southern Cross (370 kms east of Perth), Lake Grace (425 kms south-east of Perth) and Jerramungup (560 kms south-east of Perth). None of these towns have schools providing secondary education to Year 12 so the town of Merredin (260 kms east of Perth) was included to provide Year 11 and 12 students. The five towns are up to 340 kms apart, north to south, and 100 kms apart, east to west. They are principally wheat farming areas, although some gold is still mined at Southern Cross. Wheat farming has recently become more profitable although continuing mechanization of farming has meant some contraction in the employment opportunities in that industry.

The title 'South West' is used to describe an area of about 8,000 square kilometres based on the town of Manjimup and extending between 50 and 60 kilometres around it. The area is located between 250 and 370 kilometres south of Perth and includes the other population centres of Bridgetown, Boyup Brook, Pemberton, Nannup and Northcliffe. Timber, fruit growing, dairying and pastoral activities predominate. The South West had been declining for several years before some recent mining and wood chipping initiatives contributed to its stability.

The title 'Pilbara' is used to describe three pockets of settlement within the Pilbara statistical division. These settlements are Newman, Tom Price and Paraburdoo, which are between 1 400 and 1 500 kilometres north of Perth. Tom Price and Paraburdoo are neighbouring towns, approximately 90 kms apart and 260 kms from the coast. Newman is located approximately 200 kms east of the other centres. Each town was established to house and service the local, large-scale iron-ore mining activities, and each was set up mainly by the mining companies concerned. Expansion in the towns has been very rapid but their rates of economic development have slowed markedly in the last three years.

These three areas have different economic bases, different settlement histories and different degrees of isolation and include settlements of different sizes. By selecting areas with a range of situations in these matters considered to influence both the occupational aspirations and attainments of students, it was hoped that the study would report circumstances with which most rural areas could identify.

Once the three areas had been selected, the principals of the schools concerned were contacted to seek their participation in the study. This was given readily in all cases.

2.2 Background descriptions of the areas

Descriptions of the areas were assembled which concentrated on the employment, social and cultural opportunities they offered and the types of education provision made in each part of the area. A list was prepared of the information to be collected and is given in Appendix A. The background descriptions of the three regions are the subject of the next chapter of this report.

2.3 Initial survey

The data collection commenced with a questionnaire administered early in November, 1978 to all students in Years 9 to 12 in the fourteen schools involved. The questionnaire sought three types of information from the students - personal details (such as name, age, sex, place of living and number of siblings), educational details (such as grade and number of schools attended) and personal aspirations and expectations (such as types of occupations sought, likely chances of personal success and willingness to leave the study area). A copy of the questionnaire is given in Appendix B.

Arrangements were made with the schools concerned for members of the study team to administer the questionnaire during normal class periods. When the study team visited Merredin Senior High School the Year 12 students had already commenced study leave prior to the Tertiary Admissions Examinations. The team was provided with the names and addresses of these students and questionnaires were mailed to them with the request that they be completed and returned. A total of 25 out of 33 questionnaires were completed and returned from these students.

The sample of students involved in the study totalled 1 371, being all students in Years 9 to 12 in the selected schools who were at the school on the day the questionnaire was administered plus those Year 12 students from Merredin who returned their questionnaires. Year 9 students were included because the overall sample required was of all potential school leavers in the selected schools. Although normally below the compulsory leaving age, students can leave school at the end of Year 9 or early in Year 10 if they obtain an exemption from the Minister for Education.

2.4 Identifying the school leavers

The next task was to determine which students in the sample actually left school at the end of 1978 or during first term, 1979. The schools were sent lists of the students who had completed the initial questionnaire, and were asked to indicate the current enrolment status of each of those students in one of four categories. These were:

(i) Students still enrolled in that school.

(ii) Students no longer enrolled in their 1978 school but known to be full-time students at other schools or institutions which the schools were asked to name.

(iii) Students no longer enrolled in their 1978 school, and known not to be enrolled as full-time students elsewhere; but who still resided in the district.

(iv) Students no longer enrolled in their 1978 school and known to have left the district. Schools were asked to give forwarding addresses if possible.

Members of the study team then noted all the schools and institutions named for students in category (ii) and checked whether they were enrolled on a full-time basis in 1979. The follow-up questionnaire was sent to all of the sample now in categories (iii) and (iv) and to those few in category (ii) whose full-time enrolment was not confirmed.

2.5 Follow-up survey

Those identified as school leavers were contacted again between April and May, 1979 with a questionnaire seeking details of their post-school experiences. This survey was conducted by mail. The questionnaire, a copy of which is given in Appendix C, was in three parts. The first section asked for reasons why students had left school, how useful

they thought the school had been in assisting them to make the transition from school to work, whether they were studying full- or part-time and whether they presently had either full- or part-time jobs. The second section was to be completed only by those students who had jobs and sought details of their jobs, how they were obtained and whether they were likely to be 'permanent'. The third section was for unemployed school leavers and sought information about how long they had been unemployed, what jobs if any they had gained since leaving school and how they reacted to being unemployed. There was a 69% response rate to this questionnaire, the results of which are discussed in Chapter 5 of this report.

In addition to the data assembled from this second questionnaire, school achievement data (in the form of Achievement Certificate results in the four core subjects - English, science, social studies and mathematics) were also collected for those students who left school after being in Year 9 or Year 10 during 1978. This information also forms part of the discussion in Chapter 5.

2.6 Case studies

To extend the understanding that the study would gain of the experiences of school leavers, it was decided to supplement the questionnaire and background data with case study interviews with 12 students from the original sample, four from each of the following groups:

Group 1: Students who had obtained their present jobs shortly after leaving school.

Group 2: Students who were unemployed at the time of the second survey.

Group 3: Students who indicated, in the initial survey, that they expected to leave school at the end of 1978 but who re-enrolled as full-time students in 1979.

In all cases the interviews with students or former students were supplemented by interviews with at least one parent and one teacher. The case studies have been used to provide illustrative data in Chapter 5.

This study thus included background data as well as survey and interview information. The next chapter describes the three regions involved in this study.

3. THE STUDY AREAS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the economic, demographic, social and educational characteristics of the three areas. The background circumstances in which students live and the economic framework of their local areas were considered likely to condition the educational, employment and other life choices that they make. These characteristics constitute contextual information within which the results of the surveys of the overall sample and the school leaver sub-sample must be considered. Information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Western Australian Department of Industrial Development forms the main basis of the descriptions. Information describing the education provision in each area has come from Education Department sources.

3.1 The Outer Wheatbelt

The term Outer Wheatbelt describes five pockets of settlement located in principally wheat and sheep farming areas. The settlements are quite widely dispersed. They stretch from Jerramungup in the south, approximately 350 kms to Mukinbudin in the north and from Merredin in the west, approximately 120 kms to Southern Cross in the east. The area is shown on Map 1 at the end of this chapter. The towns concerned are the largest in those local government areas, although Jerramungup is an exception. It is located in the large Shire of Gnowangerup but is some 100 kilometres east of the town of Gnowangerup, that shire's largest population centre.

These towns all have different settlement histories. Southern Cross began in the 1890s as a gold mining centre and, after an initial boom, quickly lost much of its population to the richer fields further east. Merredin and Lake Grace were mainly settled during the 1920s as wheat growing areas. The spread of wheat growing into the marginal lands further to the north and east resulted in the establishment of Mukinbudin and the revival of Southern Cross. Jerramungup is a much more recent settlement resulting from the opening of farming areas on the lighter soils of that area during the late 1950s and the early 1960s.

a. Demographic factors

These settlements have recently been characterized by stable or slightly declining populations. [illegible] towns themselves have generally shown slight incr[illegible]s in population from a total of 5 300 in 1971 to 5 800 in 1976.

Four of the towns have less than 1 000 inhabitants (Jerramungup being the smallest with 225 persons) and Merredin has a population of approximately 3 700. The overall population of the five local government areas concerned has declined slightly from 13 750 in 1971 to 13 460 in 1976. Only Merredin and Mukinbudin shires have registered increases in population and these have been small. Reductions in the amount of labour needed on farms as they have become more mechanized and extensive industries could explain the rise in town populations while the total population has declined.

The population of the area is approximately 13 500. Overall, males outnumber females and this is most pronounced in the 15-24 age group. The proportion of this area's population under 15 years of age is slightly above the State average while its proportion of people over 65 years of age is considerably below that average. People tend to retire away from the district.

The people in this area are predominantly Australian born and overwhelmingly English speaking. Those on farms have commonly been resident there for several generations. Many of the people in the towns are also long term residents although many, especially those employed in the government services, are appointed there for an average of two or three years.

b. Economic factors

Farming (usually wheat or wheat and sheep) and service activities based in the local towns are the most important areas of employment. There is a small group of people employed in mining in the Yilgarn area, a group which may increase if the world price for gold continues to rise. At the time of the 1976 Census the region employed about 4 600 males (1 300 were aged between 15 and 24 years) and 2 400 females (600 were aged between 15 and 24). Unemployment involved very few families but was rather more common among females. The most common occupation categories available in the area for males were farmers (48.9% of the male workforce), craftsmen and foremen (16.9%), drivers (8.6%), managerial (5%), professional (4.1%) and labourers (3.7%).

Females commonly gave their occupations as farmers (38.8%), clerical workers (14.9%), personal and domestic service workers (14.1%), shop assistants (10.6%) and professionals (7.7%). It should be noted that most of the females describing themselves as farmers probably have partnership arrangements with their husbands. This puts the importance of clerical, sales and personal or domestic service positions, the jobs likely to be sought by female school leavers, in the employment of females in this area into clearer perspective.

The economic future of the area is very much dependent on the marketability of its agricultural output, particularly wheat. Predictions are that prices for foodstuffs will retain the present high levels and that the long-term profitability of the wheat industry will also be high. However agricultural industries have been characterized by significant short-term fluctuations caused by climatic and other factors. Such fluctuations can be quite local in nature and can have serious effects on individual communities. Additionally, wheat farming is likely to continue as a large-scale, capital-intensive enterprise and consolidation of farms is also likely to continue. Consequently, the declines in population evident in recent years may well persist. Employment opportunities in farming are unlikely to expand. The effects of technological developments on the availability of service-related occupations in the towns are not yet fully understood, but it is also unlikely that these will increase in the future.

The Outer Wheatbelt area is not likely to benefit from any growth in more labour intensive industries such as tourism. So, while the long-term economic future of this area seems bright in income-earning terms, the situation is less attractive in terms of future employment opportunities. In the smallest centres the range of occupations available for school leavers is most restricted and, while the larger centres offer a broader range of positions, there is correspondingly greater competition for those jobs.

c. Social and cultural factors

The range of activities available in the Outer Wheatbelt is largely a function of the size of the population centres. All places have some sporting facilities such as for golf, tennis, cricket, basketball and football. All have at least one hotel, one or two churches, banks, a drive-in theatre, a post office and schools. Each of the centres, except Jerramungup, is a seat of local government and all except Jerramungup have a railway station. The localities generally obtain satisfactory television reception although this normally does not include the commercial channels. Sporting and community service clubs constitute major recreational pursuits for both males and females. Professional entertainment of a dramatic or sporting type is not usually available locally although this comment would apply less to Merredin. Social and cultural activities are often organized on a 'do it yourself' basis.

Many government and semi-government agencies are not represented in the smaller towns. Sometimes they are serviced from nearby larger centres and sometimes residents have to travel to those centres or to Perth. For example, only Merredin has a Commonwealth Employment Service office and it serves Southern Cross and Mukinbudin. Lake Grace is served from Narrogin (130 kilometres away) and Jerramungup from Albany (160 kilometres away).

d. Educational provision

In the Outer Wheatbelt five schools were involved in this study. Four are district high schools which means they offer education from pre-primary to Year 10, normally the last year before the student reaches the school leaving age. In each case, secondary enrolments are less than 100 students. Their staffing includes two or three senior positions (often one has specific responsibility for the secondary part of the school) and teachers with sufficient breadth of training between them to cover the core subjects of English, social studies, mathematics and science at the three or four levels of study available and to provide a range of option subjects for both boys and girls. At Merredin there is a senior high school which offers courses from Year 8 to 12. The same core subjects are provided for Years 8 to 10 and, while many of the options are the same, a broader range is offered. Courses leading to the Tertiary

Admissions Examinations and to the Certificate of Secondary Education are also available for students in Years 11 and 12 as well as other (often titled 'alternative') courses certificated by the school which also operate in the 11th and 12th Years (but more commonly only in the 11th Year). With some 560 students in 1978, Merredin Senior High School is much larger than the district high schools and has more staff and more senior positions, many of which involve responsibility for specific subject areas. Teachers in this school are usually used in more subject specialized ways than are those in the district high schools and more specialists such as guidance officers and remedial teachers are available on site.

The majority of students live at home and travel short distance to school each day. Many of the others travel daily on school bus services, often coming from 50 or 60 kilometres away. Merredin is the one centre in the whole study where a hostel is available for students (many of whom are in Years 11 and 12) who must live away from home.

District high schools, as a consequence of their small size, do not have as broad a range of specialist services available on site as senior high schools. Arrangements usually involve such specialist and advisory support being available from the appropriate regional office or, in some cases, the nearest senior high school. Mukinbudin, Southern Cross and Merredin are all served from the Yilgarn Regional Office located in Merredin, Lake Grace from the Upper Great Southern Regional Office in Narrogin and Jerramungup from the Great Southern Regional Office in Albany. Itineraries are usually drawn up to ensure these schools see all available specialist and support staff at appropriate times through the year.

Less direct access to specialist and advisory staff is one source of concern about rural schools (especially the small ones). Another relates to the relative inexperience and high mobility of their staffs. In early 1979, the five Outer Wheatbelt schools had a total of 99 staff members who had taught for an average of 6.4 years. There were 11 teachers in their first year of teaching, 74 of the 99 had been less than two years in their present school and 9 had been there over five years. The five schools offered 17 promotional positions, 13 people in those positions had held them for less than two years and 1 had held that position for more than five years.

These schools are staffed by teachers with fewer years experience than staffs in urban schools and are run by teachers more recently promoted. The expectation is that both class teachers and those in promotional positions will stay only two or three years. High mobility of both class and senior teachers can disrupt the continuity of the educational experiences of students. However, too stable staffs can have their own disadvantages and there may be some advantages in having both classroom and senior teachers with the enthusiasm that often accompanies new responsibilities. High turnover rates among both senior staffs and class teachers is a serious problem in some rural schools and it may have a significant effect on the career education programmes offered by those schools. This can apply particularly in work experience where some detailed knowledge of the local community is desirable.

During 1978, career education in each of these five schools was a specific additional responsibility of one staff member. In most of the schools relatively few of the students were able to participate in work-experience programmes and the district high schools received only two or three visits from regionally based guidance officers. In 1979 a youth education officer, with special responsibility for school-to work transition for students leaving in Years 9 and 10, was appointed to Merredin Senior High School. Additionally, Mukinbudin and Southern Cross District High Schools appointed careers advisers (teachers with part-time responsibilities in the careers area). During 1979 some of the Year 10 students at Merredin, 42 Year 9 and 10 students at Mukinbudin, 15 Year 10s at Lake Grace and 24 Year 10s at Southern Cross all had the opportunity to participate in at least one programme of work experience. While this situation represents an improvement over that operating in 1978, many students who leave these five schools still have not been involved in work experience programmes, although all now have improved access to current careers advice. However, the responses reported later in this report reflect the experiences of those enrolled in these schools in 1978.

3.2 The South-West

In this study the South-West describes an area extending about 100 kilometres east to west and 120 kilometres north to south. It is centred on the town of Manjimup, about 300 kilometres south-east of Perth and includes the smaller towns of Bridgetown, Boyup Brook, Nannup, Pemberton and Northcliffe. Manjimup serves as more of a natural centre for this area than does Merredin for the Outer Wheat Belt. For example, many of the students continuing at school beyond Year 10 attend Manjimup Senior

Senior High School. The South-West consists basically of the Blackwood subdivision of the South-West statistical division and includes four local government areas - the shires of Boyup Brook, Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Manjimup and Nannup. The area is shown on Map 1 at the end of this chapter.

The area was closely settled after the First World War when timber extraction and some farming and orcharding were the main economic pursuits. Agriculture is still the main base of the area but takes many more forms than in the Outer Wheatbelt. Meat, cattle, vegetables, fruits, dairying, wool and grains are important agricultural activities and wood chipping and tourism are other important income producers.

a. Demographic factors

The South-West area has had a steadily declining population for several years. Between 1971 and 1976 the population of the region declined from approximately 14 900 to 13 900. All four local government areas demonstrated this decline. Of the six major towns in this area, only Manjimup increased in population - from 3 500 in 1971 to 3 700 in 1976. Four of the towns have less than 1 000 people, the smallest being Northcliffe with 208 inhabitants. Bridgetown has approximately 1 300 residents. The towns in this area have lost population much less rapidly than have their hinterlands. The decline in the area's primary industries, as evidenced by the closing of the flax mill in Boyup Brook, has resulted in the reduction of the other shires' populations while the Manjimup Shire has received some stimulus from recent developments such as wood chipping and fruit canning.

The population of this area totals almost 14 000. Males outnumber females but not to the extent noted in the Outer Wheatbelt. The population is a relatively older one than in the Outer Wheatbelt and people aged 65 years or more are present in much greater numbers.

The predominance of Australian born people, which was noted in the Outer Wheatbelt, is still evident but to a lesser extent, and a larger proportion (122 out of 14 000 compared with 52 out of 13 500) reported not being able to speak English. The farmers and other property owners are mainly long-term residents of the area and the people in the towns are more likely to also be permanent residents than is the case in the Outer Wheatbelt.

b. Economic factors

A variety of agricultural activities, including meat and dairy cattle, wool, grains, fruit and vegetables, extractive industries such as wood chipping and forestry and some agriculture-related processing such as fruit canning offer the major employment opportunities in the South-West. Tourism and jobs related to the regional and local services offered by government and semi-government agencies are also important. At the time of the 1976 Census the South-West employed about 4 300 males (1 000 were aged between 15 and 24 years) and 2 100 females (600 were aged between 15 and 24). Unemployment was more common than in the Outer Wheatbelt but still involved less than 200 people of working age. Females represented about 60% of those unemployed. The most common occupation categories available in the area for males were craftsmen and foremen (34.3% of the male workforce), farmers (28.7%), drivers (6.8%), managers (5.5%), professional (5.3%), rural workers (4.8%) and labourers (3.7%). Females most commonly gave their occupations as farmers (29.6%), personal and domestic service workers (14.8%), clerical workers (14.5%), professional (12.5%), shop assistants (9.5%) and factory workers (4.9%). The comments made in the previous section about females giving their occupations as farmers would also apply here, but fewer are involved.

Predictions made by the Department of Industrial Development indicate that agricultural and timber production in the South-West will remain stable over the next ten years. Fruit growing may be an exception as this region increasingly replaces a former major growing area in the hills about 30 to 50 kilometres south-east of Perth. There is likely to be growth in employment in tourism-related activities. However, overall employment is expected to remain steady over the period 1980 to 1990 because these rises will only partially offset declines in employment in agriculture and forestry (Department of Industrial Development, 1976).

Some areas near the South-West may experience strong growth in their employment opportunities. Examples are the planned expansion of bauxite mining and alumina refining based in Pinjarra, about 200 kilometres north of Manjimup and the expansion of coal production at Collie, about 140 kilometres north of Manjimup. While these developments may offer some prospects for school leavers from this study area, they would mainly be for male leavers and then would be only suitable for those prepared to move away from home.

Stable, or even slightly declining, employment opportunities in the South-West over the next decade is not an encouraging prediction. It is made all the less attractive by the knowledge that between 2 000 and 2 500 students will leave secondary schools to seek work during that time.

c. Social and cultural factors

The general points made in the description of the Outer Wheatbelt, such as the breadth of social and cultural facilities depending on the size of the locality, also apply to the South-West. Sporting and social activities available in this area are similar to those in the Outer Wheatbelt but there are many different types of recreational pursuits such as canoeing, fishing and bush-walking. The comments made about professional entertainment in the Outer Wheatbelt also apply here although, with a somewhat larger group of permanent residents and towns which are closer together, the South-West has more exchanges of locally-organized activities. Manjimup, as the largest town and logical focus for the area, is the base for most government and semi-government agencies. The Commonwealth Employment Service office for the area is located there. The close proximity of the large regional city of Bunbury to the northern parts of this area, especially to Boyup Brook and Bridgetown (and services it provides, tends to reduce the focal role played by Manjimup.

d. Educational provision

In the South-West six schools were involved in this study. Four are district high schools, one is a high school and one is a senior high school. The district high schools are similar to those described in the Outer Wheatbelt, although the one at Boyup Brook is somewhat larger. Manjimup Senior High School is similar in size, range of courses and services to that in Merredin. At Bridgetown there is a high school which enrols students in Years 8, 9 and 10. It is separate from the local primary school and offers its students all the core subjects as well as a wide range of optional studies.

The vast majority of students in this area live at home and walk to school or travel daily by school bus or some other means. Students from Bridgetown and Pemberton who continue to Years 11 and 12 most commonly enrol at Manjimup and utilize daily bus services. Northcliffe students can either board privately in Manjimup (there is no hostel) or study at home, using the Isolated Students Matriculation

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Scheme.[1] Students continuing to Years 11 and 12 from Nannup mostly enrol at Busselton Senior High School and make the 120 kilometre round trip each day by school bus. Students from Boyup Brook who continue to Year 11 are more likely to enrol in schools in Collie, Bunbury or even Pinjarra than they are to board away from home in Manjimup.

The comments made about the availability of specialist and advisory support staff in the Outer Wheatbelt also apply to the South-West. As well as a guidance officer and a youth education officer based at Manjimup Senior High School, other specialist and support services are provided from the Education Department's South-West Regional Office which is located in Bunbury, approximately 100 kilometres north of Manjimup. Concerns in the smaller schools about their lack of direct access to specialist, remedial and guidance support are also felt in the South-West. However, staff inexperience and mobility, while still evident, are not problems to the same degree as noted in the Outer Wheatbelt. Early in 1979 there were 115 teachers in these six schools. They had taught for an average for 9.1 years and 7 of them were in their first year of teaching. There were 59 teachers who had been in those schools less than two years and 12 who had been over 5 years in their present school. The schools offered 25 senior positions, 16 of which had been occupied by the same person for less than two years and seven of which had been occupied by the same person for over five years.

Approaches to careers education in these schools in 1978 were similar to those noted in the Outer Wheatbelt, except that Manjimup Senior High School did have a youth education officer with special responsibilities for the school-to-work transition of early school leavers. In addition these students had more involvement in work-experience programmes than their Outer Wheatbelt counterparts but still only a minority of potential school leavers were able to participate.[2]

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1. This scheme provides correspondence and other distance education services allowing isolated students to undertake courses leading to the Tertiary Admissions Examination.

2. All the schools appointed careers advisers during 1979 and operated work-experience programmes on a scale sufficient to allow virtually all Year 10 students in the schools outside Manjimup to participate. In 1979 in Manjimup about 75% of the Year 10 students and about 50% of the Year 11 students were involved in these programmes.

3.3 The Pilbara

In this study the Pilbara describes three pockets of settlement in the north-west of the State, located 1 400 to 1 500 kilometres north of Perth and between 260 and 500 kilometres from the coast. Newman is the largest settlement and Tom Price and Paraburdoo are each smaller and located about 90 kilometres apart, some 220 kilometres west of Newman. These settlements have the same economic base, namely iron-ore mining, but they do not constitute a region in the sense described for the South-West. Tom Price and Paraburdoo would regard themselves as neighbouring towns but neither is a higher order settlement than the other. These two towns have little contact with Newman because transport, administrative and educational links from Tom Price and Paraburdoo lead more to Karratha and Hedland (between 250 and 300 kilometres north). The three towns form part of the East Pilbara and West Pilbara local government areas. These are both huge shires where most of the people are clustered in a few townships. The area is shown on Map 2 at the end of this chapter.

The Pilbara area originally consisted of very extensive pastoral leases with very low population densities. During the 1960s with the lifting of the embargo on the export of iron ore, extensive mining developments began. Quite large towns were developed by mining companies to operate nearby mines or to transport the iron ore. Paraburdoo, Tom Price and Newman are three such towns where the facilities were mainly developed by the mining companies concerned, primarily to house the workforce needed by nearby mines. Subsequently an infrastructure represented by government agencies and schools was also established.

a. Demographic factors

These three towns were established during the 1960s and experienced very rapid increases in their populations. As the developmental aspects of their functions have given way to more operational ones, their populations have stabilized and even declined somewhat. In the Pilbara, even more so than in the other two areas, it makes sense only to describe the towns as entities rather than the local government areas which really consist of a few such towns. Tom Price and Paraburdoo have populations of between 2 500 and 3 000 and were between 200 and 500 people smaller in 1976 than they had been in 1971. Newman is the largest town with almost 4 700 people in 1976, 800 more than in 1971.

The area has a population of almost 10 300 of which 6 100 are males. The population is one where males heavily outnumber females, especially in the 15 to 24 age group. Many of the men are single. People of working age are over-represented in the population and those over 65 years of age comprise only 1% of the total.

A majority of the people were born in Australia and they predominantly speak only English. A significant minority of people were born overseas, mainly in the United Kingdom. Many people are transients in the sense that they have little intention of becoming permanent residents of the towns. They are there to work for a specific number of years to acquire sufficient money to re-establish themselves elsewhere. Though this characteristic has declined as the towns have developed, it is still present today.

b. Economic factors

The three towns offer employment related to the mining activities or to the service functions performed in the town. Employment offered by 'The Company' includes drivers, miners, labourers, engineers or craftsmen, or as office workers, clerical assistants, cooks or security officers. In the towns, service industries are common as are the usual variety of government and semi-government agencies such as police and education. At the time of the 1976 Census these towns offered jobs to approximately 4 300 males (1 200 were aged between 15 and 24 years) and about 1 200 females (350 were aged between 15 and 24 years). This region clearly has fewer job opportunities for females than the other two and the situation is especially difficult for girls leaving school. Unemployment involved only about 100 people of working age and, although women made up only about one-fifth of the employed workforce, about twice as many females as males were unemployed.

The most common occupation categories available in these towns for males were craftsmen and foremen (38.8% of the male workforce), miners (18.3%), drivers (7.2%), professionals (6.8%), managers (3.1%) and personal and domestic service workers (2.7%). Females most commonly gave their occupations as personal and domestic service workers (28.3%), clerical workers (20.8%), professionals (13.3%) and shop assistants (10.0%). For women, not only were jobs relatively scarce, they also covered a very narrow range of work.

The continued economic development of these towns is heavily dependent on the future marketability of the iron ore. Their infrastructures are likely to continue to develop and more positions may be created as they offer wider ranges of services and facilities. However, real expansion will only result from increased orders for iron ore. World steel demand has declined recently and concern about energy sources is unlikely to produce a reversal of this trend. However, more optimistically, the higher degree of population mobility in these towns is likely to contribute to the number of positions available to future school leavers and the companies have a policy of employing as many of the school leavers as possible.

c. Social and cultural factors

These towns are easily the most isolated of any in this study. They are located large distances from other population centres, often over unsealed roads. Climatically, conditions in the towns are quite harsh. They have little systematic access to the mass media and their costs of living are high. The mining companies have attempted to compensate for these difficulties by providing excellent air conditioned housing and a broad range of facilities for social and recreational activities.

The communities are relatively introspective and the concept of 'The Company' pervades most aspects of life. Sporting and social activities usually mirror those of other communities but with adaptations for climate and terrain. Professional entertainers occasionally visit but self-help dramatic and theatrical activities are less common than in rural areas in the south. Most government and semi-government services are provided either through Karratha or Hedland but the importance of these agencies in the lives of residents is reduced by the breadth of activities of the companies.

d. Educational provision

In the Pilbara area three schools were involved in this study. They comprise district high schools at Paraburdoo and Tom Price and a senior high school at Newman. Tom Price District High School caters for students in Years 6 to 11. The students almost all live at home and either walk or ride bicycles to school. Tom Price and Paraburdoo students continuing to Years 11 and 12 commonly move either to Karratha or Hedland (where there is a hostel) or go to non-government boarding schools either in Geraldton or Perth.

Some adaptations have been made to the educational programmes offered by these schools, to take account of their special circumstances. For example, Newman, Paraburdoo and Tom Price were among the first schools in Western Australia to offer students alternative, non-Tertiary Admission Examination courses in Years 11 and 12 and these are now popular and well established.

Specialist, remedial and advisory services are available to these schools from the Education Department's Regional Office in Hedland. Advisory and other support staff, especially guidance staff, also visit these schools from the Department's head office in Perth. Of the three areas in this study the teachers in these three schools would be the most professionally isolated. They are also relatively inexperienced and highly mobile. Early in 1979,

these schools employed 82 teachers. They had taught, on average, for 5.2 years and included 16 who were in their first year of teaching. Only two of the teachers had been in their present school for more than five years and 65 had been there less than two years. The schools offered 14 senior positions. None of the incumbents had held those positions for over five years and 13 had held them less than two years.

Students in these schools tend to see only a narrow range of occupations in their daily lives. For this reason the schools have given earlier and more concentrated attention to the question of careers education and the more general issue of transition to work than most other rural schools. Work experience is offered to all students in alternative 11th year courses but not usually to Year 10 students, since most leaving from that Year are going to specific jobs.[1]

The three areas vary in size, degree of isolation and employment opportunities offered but there are also several commonalities. All the areas offer limited employment prospects - both in number and breadth of job types. They all offer fewer opportunities for female leavers. Students wishing to proceed with their education beyond Year 12 are not catered for in any of the regions. There were regional differences in the responses received in both surveys, for example, the occupational choices of males in the Pilbara were different from those of males in the other areas. However the uniformity of post-school experiences of school leavers is a strong feature of the data collected in this study. The descriptions of the areas should therefore be regarded as examples of the general context within which rural school leavers make occupational decisions rather than as specific conditioners of occupational aspirations and attainments.

The next two chapters report the aspirations of the students in the schools and the experiences of those who left school.

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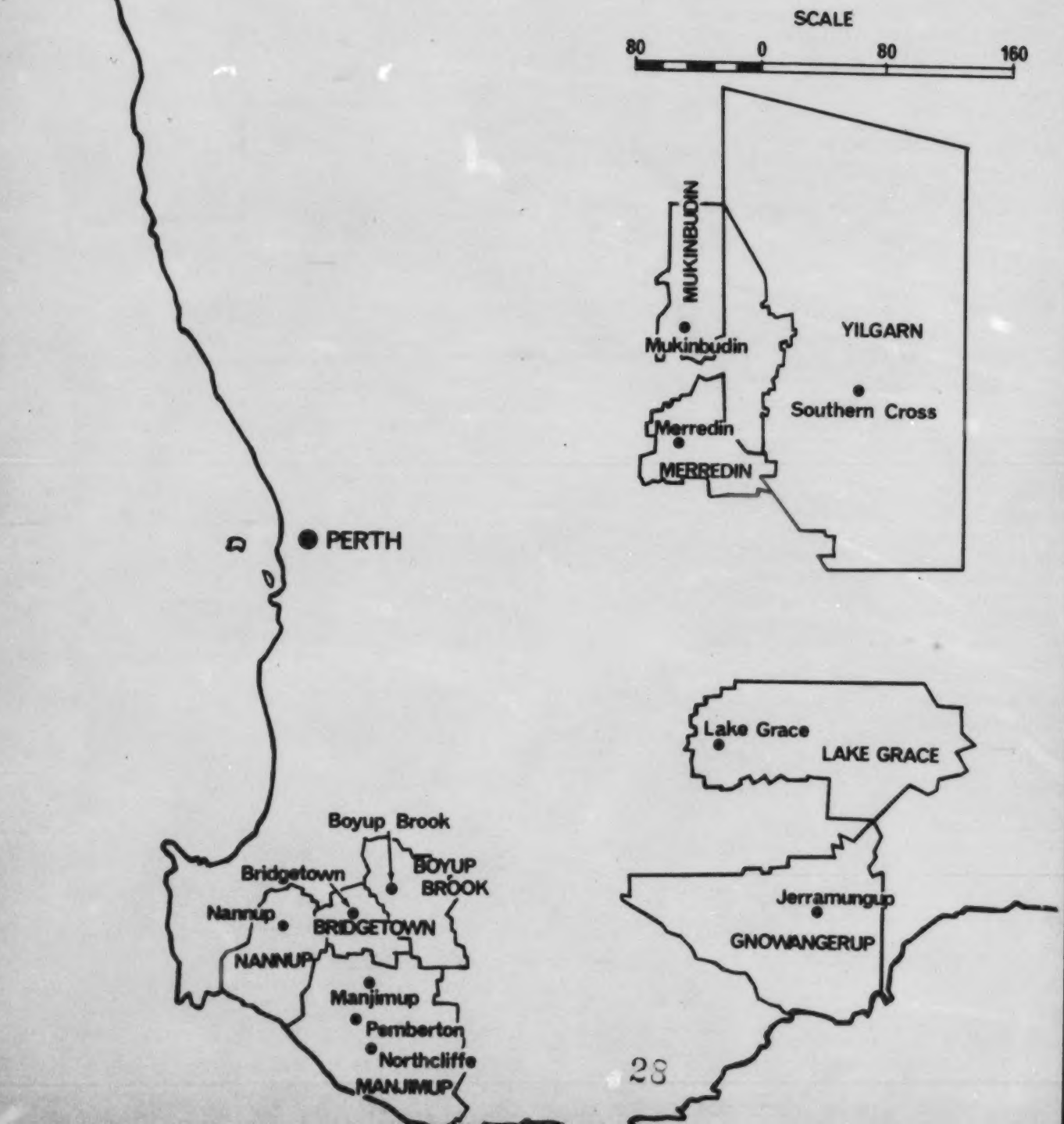
1. In 1979 all three schools appointed careers advisers to co-ordinate their careers-education programmes.

OUTER WHEATBELT AND SOUTH—WEST REGIONS
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MAP 1



PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA
MAP 2

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POTENTIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the characteristics of the sample of students enrolled in Years 9 to 12 who constituted the group of potential school leavers in the study regions. These characteristics have been determined from responses to the questionnaire[1] administered in November, 1978 and they have been described[2] under five sub-headings:

Personal and family circumstances
Educational aspirations and experiences
Occupational aspirations
Personal (non-occupational) aspirations
Reactions to rural life

4.1 Personal and family circumstances

The sample of 1 371 potential school leavers was almost evenly divided between males and females. About 25% were aged 16 years or more, and in this group girls slightly outnumbered boys.

a. Place of living compared with location of school

Almost 8% of the sample indicated that they did not live at home during the school term. Most of these students were enrolled in Years 11 and 12 and reflect the usually incomplete provision of secondary education in rural centres. There were strong regional influences on the likelihood of living away from home to attend school. In the Pilbara and the South-West respectively only 1.8% and 2.9% of students reported living away from home. In the Outer Wheatbelt the figure was 17%. The higher response rate is explained by the hostel located near Merredin Senior High School.

Most students lived within 30 minutes of the schools and few used public transport to travel there each day. School buses were more common in the South-West and Outer Wheatbelt where students, especially those in Years 11 and 12, tended to spend longer travelling each day than their counterparts in the Pilbara.

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1. This questionnaire and the responses to it are shown in Appendix B.

2. In the text, differences described as 'more likely than' have been found to be significant at the 5% level. Differences described as 'much more likely than' have been found to be significant at the 1% level.

b. Country of Origin

Overall, 83% of respondents were born in Australia. In the Pilbara 42% were born overseas, most others in the United Kingdom. About 75% of those not born in Australia here arrived more than five years ago. Only 8% of respondents claimed that a language in addition to English was spoken in their homes. This group was concentrated in the South-West and Italian was the most common additional language.

c. Parental occupations

Overall, 92% of respondents had fathers in full-time work, 2% had no father, 2% had fathers who were retired or on pensions and 1% had fathers who were unemployed. Unemployment was most prevalent among fathers in the South-West where it involved 1.8% of respondents. The largest occupational categories (based on Australian Bureau of Statistics categories, which the study team allocated to the responses) represented were graziers (14%), craftsmen and foremen (14%), farmers (11%), drivers (10%) and miners (10%). There were strong regional influences on these employment groups. The Pilbara, for example, had no farmers or graziers but craftsmen and foremen constituted 22% of the fathers and 30% were miners.

Although only small numbers were involved, more respondents enrolled in Years 11 and 12 than those in Years 9 and 10 listed upper or lower professional category occupations for their fathers. Conversely, more Years 9 and 10 students described fathers' occupations which were categorized as 'farm and rural worker' and 'labourer'. Girls were more likely than boys to have fathers who were farmers or graziers. This was supported by responses to a later question in which more girls than boys said they lived on farms. Possibly it indicates that sons of farmers and graziers are more likely to undertake secondary education (especially in Years 11 and 12) away from home than are their daughters.

About 20% of respondents reported that their mothers worked full-time. Regional variations were significant with the corresponding figure for the Pilbara being 38% and the South-West 13%. Part-time work involved 27% of mothers and 48% of mothers had no paid job (but only 28% of mothers in the Pilbara had no paid work). The major occupational groups for working mothers were personal and domestic services (48%), lower professional (19%), clerical and related duties (15%) and shop assistant (15%).

More Year 11 and 12 respondents than those in Years 9 and 10 indicated that their mothers worked in occupations grouped as Lower Professional. In contrast, fewer students in Years 11 and 12 reported their mothers as working in the personal and domestic service category.

4.2 Educational aspirations and experiences

a. Retention into Years 11 and 12

Information for 1977 and 1978 showed that between 40% and 50% of Year 10 students in these 14 schools continued into Year 11. However, there was considerable variation between individual schools. In the Pilbara, the retention rate was only 35% with most of those in Year 11 undertaking non-tertiary admission courses and relatively few continuing to Year 12. While the differences are not significant, there were more girls than boys in the sample enrolled in Years 11 and 12. This difference was greatest in Year 11 and may be partly explained by the availability of more terminal courses in Year 11 for girls than for boys.

b. Enrolment mobility

Overall, 76% of the sample had attended only one secondary school. Most of the others had changed school to commence Year 8 and/or Year 11 because their town offered no (or incomplete) secondary education. Significantly more students in the Pilbara (38%) than in the Outer Wheatbelt (21%) and the South-West (18%) had been to other secondary schools. This occurred in spite of fewer Year 11 and 12 enrolments in that region and may be a reflection of the relative newness of the Pilbara settlements. Most students involved said their other schools had been located either in major urban centres or other country towns.

c. When students plan to leave school

This question identified 18% of the students as 'Not Sure', 18% said that they would leave at the end of Year 10, 15% at the end of Year 11, 40% at the end of Year 12 and 5% when they found a job. Students in the Pilbara more frequently were not sure, were likely to leave when they found a job or wanted to leave at the end of Year 11. In the Outer Wheatbelt leaving at the end of Year 10 was a more common response. Boys were more likely to answer 'at the end of Year 10' while girls were a greater proportion of the group responding 'at the end of Year 11' and 'at the end of Year 12'.

d. What plans students have for after leaving school

Overall, 18% of respondents had not decided on their post-school plans, and the girls were more likely to be undecided. Approximately 37% of students were looking for an apprenticeship or other job training but more boys, Pilbara respondents and Years 9 and 10 students gave this response. Overall, 21% were aiming for tertiary education and girls and students in Years 11 and 12 were more likely to answer this way. There were 17% who would be looking for a job as soon as possible, and girls, Year 11 and 12 students and those living in the South-West were most likely to give this response.

4.3 Occupational aspirations

a. Definiteness of job plans

In response to a question about how definite were their job plans, 59% of students claimed to know the job they wanted, 4% said they had not thought much about jobs, 14% said they had thought about it but really had no idea and 23% said they were trying to decide between certain jobs. The students in Years 11 and 12 proved to be no more definite in their job plans than the others. Boys were more likely both to have decided on a job or not to have thought much about jobs. Girls were more likely than boys to admit to having thought about it but to have no idea what job they would like.

b. Expected and preferred employment

Students were asked to name the job they expected to get and, in a later question, the job they would prefer. The responses to these two questions correlated very closely, indicating either that students were unable to distinguish between expectations and preferences, that they expected their aspirations to be realized or that their preferences were strongly tempered with realism. The occupation categories most commonly expected were lower professional (23%), craftsmen and foremen (18%), clerical and related duties (12%) and personal and domestic service (9%). Approximately 10% of respondents did not know which occupation they expected to enter.

There were some significant regional and level-of-enrolment influences on the expected occupation of the respondents. For example, students enrolled in Years 11 and 12 were more likely than those in Years 9 and 10 to name upper professional and clerical categories of jobs. Students in Years 9 and 10 were more likely not to know

and students in the Pilbara were more likely to name jobs in the craftsmen and foremen category. These differences continued to apply in responses outlining preferred occupations. Additional examples were that Year 11 and 12 students were more likely to name a lower professional category job and Year 9 and 10 students were more likely to list craftsmen and foremen positions. Pilbara students were more likely to list personal and domestic jobs and less likely to list lower professional jobs. Outer Wheatbelt students were less likely to list upper professional category positions.

However, the sex of the respondent was the strongest influence on the choice of both the expected and the preferred occupation. Boys were more likely than girls to expect jobs in the categories upper professional, grazier, lower professional, farmers, armed services and police, craftsmen and foremen and farm and rural workers. Girls were more likely to expect jobs in the categories clerical and related duties, shop assistant and personal and domestic workers. These differences were retained in the responses to the question about preferred employment except that girls were more likely than boys to prefer a lower professional category of job. These responses indicate that sex sterotyping is still very evident in the occupational aspirations of rural students. Any moves to broaden the range of job choices for girls do not appear to have yet had much impact on these students. This issue will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

c. Expected and preferred work location

The alternative responses to questions about where they expected and would prefer to work were 'near home', 'another country district', 'a large town in the State', 'another State', 'don't know' and 'don't care/anywhere'. Again, interpretation of the responses is complicated by not knowing the extent to which students were able to distinguish 'expected' from 'preferred'. Approximately 45% of students said they would prefer to work near home and 39% expected to work near home. Boys were more likely to give this answer to both questions and Pilbara students were less likely to prefer to work near home. Some 16% said they would prefer to work in another country district and 13% expected this to eventuate. Students in the South-West were more likely to expect to move to another country district. Some 31% expected to have to move to a large town in this State (most probably Perth) and 22% said they would prefer this as a job location. In both cases girls were more likely than boys to give this response. Nine per cent

preferred a job in another State and 5% expected to have to make such a move, a response more commonly given by the Pilbara students. Approximately 7% said they did not care or would go anywhere to find work. Girls were the most likely to give this response. One interpretation is that girls have accepted that moving away from home to get suitable work is a very likely prospect. Boys do not face quite the same situation.

Asked to compare their chances of getting the job they wanted if they lived in the city rather than the country, about 30% said their chances would be enhanced, 30% said they would be worse and 27% were equivocal. However, girls were more likely than boys to say their chances would be better if they lived in the city. They said this was because jobs of the types they wanted were more readily available in the city, that general job opportunities were better in the city or that cities were the only places where training was provided for certain jobs. The first two reasons may indicate some lack of detailed awareness of the actual employment situations existing in our major urban areas.

d. Reasons for job selection

Students were also asked to rate (as Very Important, Important or Not Important) eight general reasons for choosing their expected occupation. Some 80% of respondents rated 'liking that sort of work' as very important and, later, 62% said this was the most important of the eight reasons. Other reasons with large 'Very Important' responses were 'I want a job helping other people', 31% (and 12% listed this as the most important reason), 'The job is well paid', 19%, (and 11%) and 'The job would be fairly easy to get', 19%, (and 1%). How easy a job is to get emerged as a major reason behind the students' job choice and may be a associated with the tightening of the employment market for school leavers. Parental wishes and family involvement with that job were more important to boys and to students in the Outer Wheatbelt - no doubt influenced by boys 'carrying on' the family farm. Boys and Year 11 and 12 students were more likely to rate 'well paid' as a very important reason. Girls were more likely to rate 'liking the work and wanting a job helping others' as very important reasons for their choice of job.

e. Working on 'the farm'

Students who lived on farms or stations were asked whether they expected that they would work full-time on them in the future. Four hundred and thirty students responded to this question, 15% saying yes, 61% saying no and 24%

saying they were not sure. The group responding yes contained proportionally more Year 9-10 students than Year 11-12 students, more boys than girls and more Outer Wheatbelt than South-West students (no Pilbara students lived on farms or stations). Only two girls out of 231 who lived on farms said yes to this question. Going onto the farm is clearly an expectation of boys and those boys are likely to remain in their local schools only until Year 10.

Some 235 students were not going to work full-time on their family's farm. Asked why they were not, about 51% said because they wanted another job (significantly more of this group were girls than were boys) and 21% said because they did not want to farm (again significantly more were girls). Only 1% saw no future in farming and 11% considered their farms were not viable units. Despite the fact that the sex of the respondents was a major factor explaining their responses, no one selected the answer that farming was not a suitable occupation for girls.

f. Job advice

Students were asked with whom they had discussed choosing a job. No alternative answers were given, nor was any advice offered about how many people to list. Over 61% of those responding to this question listed their parents or other family members first, an answer most commonly given by students in Years 9 and 10. Some 18% named guidance officers, a more common answer from girls and Year 11 and 12 students. Approximately 4% named teachers (more frequently girls), 2% said employers (mainly by the Pilbara students, reflecting the prime importance of the mining companies in employment prospects in those towns) and 2% named the Commonwealth Employment Service. About 8% answered 'no one' or 'myself' and these were mainly boys and Year 9 and 10 students.

Asked to indicate, in a similarly unstructured way, who gave the most valuable job advice, 52% said family members (mainly boys, Years 11 and 12 and Outer Wheatbelt respondents), 5% said teachers, 6% said employers, 13% said guidance officers (mainly girls and Year 11 and 12 students), 2% said the Commonwealth Employment Service and 20% (a consistent response across all regions, grades and sexes) said 'no one' or 'myself'. The numbers of students able to leave school who had not sought or been given any job advice they considered useful must be a cause for concern (especially since it seems a more common response for an early school leaver), as must the numbers of students not utilizing guidance and Commonwealth Employment Service provisions.

g. Unemployment

Students were asked three questions relating to unemployment. The first questioned whether they expected to be unemployed on leaving school, and 15% answered that it was likely or very likely. Some 56% thought unemployment was possible (girls being over represented in this group) and 28% thought it unlikely or not at all likely (boys and Year 9 and 10 students were more likely to give these answers).

The second question asked those students expecting to leave school at the end of 1978 about the likely length of any post-school unemployment. With the questionnaire completed early in November, 1978, 20% of respondents (mainly boys) said they would be unemployed until the end of the year, 12% (mainly boys) said until February 1979, 8% (mainly girls) said for much of 1979, 8% (mainly girls) said indefinitely, and the other 52% did not know how long they might be unemployed.

The third question asked how much students would worry about being unemployed. Over 90% said they would worry a lot (mainly girls, and students in the Pilbara), 9% said it wouldn't matter much (mainly boys) and 1% said it wouldn't worry them at all (again mainly boys). Girls expected to be unemployed for longer periods and worried about that prospect more than boys.

4.4 Personal aspirations

The students were asked about their personal aspirations in the question 'What are the really important things you would like to do in the next five years?'. No alternatives were provided and of the 1 275 students who replied, 35% said 'get a job', 14% said 'travel' (mainly girls and older students), 2% (mainly boys) said they would like to make and/or save money, 4% hoped to marry or make new friends and 2% (mainly boys) said ' buy a house or car'. Some 38% said 'complete their education' (mainly Year 9 and 10 students). A consistent picture emerged with boys more commonly aspiring to jobs, earning and saving money and buying cars or houses and the girls more commonly hoping to travel.

Asked to choose from five alternatives describing what they thought were their chances of being a success in life, 16% of the 1 356 respondents said 'Very Good' (mainly boys and South-West students, Pilbara students were under-represented). There were 47% who said 'Good' and 34% who said 'Fair'. Girls were more likely than boys to give their chances a 'fair' rating. Less than 2% of respondents said their chances of success were 'not much good' or 'no good at all'. Girls were generally more circumspect than boys about the likelihood that they would be successes in life.

4.5 Reactions to rural life

Students were asked four questions about their reactions to living in rural areas. It has already been described that girls were more likely than boys to say their chances would be improved if they lived in the city, so it is possible that the girls would report more dissatisfaction with living in a rural area.

Firstly, unstructured responses were sought about the things the students liked and the things they disliked about their home towns or districts. The first responses given were categorized and 36% of the 1 265 respondents gave environmental factors such as no overcrowding and cleanliness as features they liked. Students from the South-West were most likely to give reasons in this category. Approximately 27% gave social reasons such as friendly residents and community involvement. Girls were more likely to cite these reasons but Pilbara students were less likely. Some 14% liked being able to be close to family and friends, a more common response in the Outer Wheatbelt. Eleven per cent liked the amenities available in the district - a very popular response from Pilbara students and 9% said there was nothing they liked about their town or district.

First responses of dislikes indicated that 46% disliked restricted social activities, an answer given most by girls and Year 11 and 12 students. Some 14%, (mainly boys and Year 9 and 10 students) had no dislikes. There were 7% (mainly girls and Year 9 and 10 students) who cited economic reasons, such as lack of employment opportunities, as their principal dislike, 5% (mainly in the South-West) who objected to the small size and insular nature of their communities and a similar percentage who disliked the isolation of those communities.

The students were also asked if they thought they lived in the country. Some 93% of respondents said yes, 4% said no and the remainder gave an answer indicating that where they lived was rural in some ways but urban in others. Students in the Pilbara were most likely to say no or to be equivocal. This probably reflects the fact that Pilbara towns are in country areas but are essentially urban settlements. About 50% of the total sample made some comment in addition to the basic answer. Of these, 80% referred to a positive element of rural life. The general picture which emerged was of a group who were familiar with life in country towns, and who had a comprehensive and well-developed view of the strengths and weaknessses of that life.

These questionnaire responses represent a survey of the attitudes, aspirations and concerns of the sample of students, before they left school. Their views have probably been conditioned in some ways by the geographic, social, family and educational circumstances of their lives and are likely to be further influenced by the experiences they have after they leave school. Only 256 of these 1 371 students left school during the period of this study and responded to the second questionnaire given in April-May, 1979. The next chapter will focus on leaving school in rural areas by looking at the characteristics and experiences of the school-leaver sub-sample.

5. LEAVING SCHOOL IN RURAL AREAS

The surveys of both the aspirations students have for when they leave school and the post-school experiences of the school leavers have revealed a number of issues requiring discussion. The case studies which were undertaken have also produced information about these matters. The purpose of this chapter is to describe the major themes and issues surrounding leaving school in rural areas that have emerged in this study.

To achieve this aim, data from three sources will be used. Firstly, the attitudes and aspirations expressed in the initial questionnaire by the students who left school will be compared with those who remained. Secondly, the experiences of both the employed and unemployed school leavers, as expressed in responses to the second questionnaire,[1] will be described. Thirdly, information obtained from interviews with 12 students, their parents and teachers will be used to illustrate the issues being discussed.

The themes and issues are difficult to assign meaningful titles. They are not separate because comments made under one theme may well have direct implications for others. Notwithstanding this difficulty, eight themes and issues will be described. These are:

Economic conditions in rural centres and areas.
Desire to remain in rural areas.
Desire to work and the means of attaining it.
School preparation of students for work.
School performance of the leavers.
Reasons for leaving school.
Different situations of male and female leavers.
Regional influences

5.1 Economic conditions in rural centres and areas

The success, or lack of it, that school leavers experience in the job market is in part a function of the qualifications, qualities and skills that they bring to that market, and in part a function of the ability of the economy to produce job opportunities for them.

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1. A copy of the questionnaire and the responses it produced, is contained in Appendix C.

Information available from the Commonwealth Employment Service (Stall, 1979) indicates that in rural towns there are often 50 adolescents aged between 15 and 19 years registered as unemployed for every suitable job vacancy that exists. While the accuracy of these figures is sometimes questioned, there seems little doubt that the rural employment situation for adolescents is one of chronic oversupply.

The follow-up questionnaire was sent to 371 of the students who left school since November 1978. Responses were received from 256 of these students, a response rate of 69%. Sixty-two had continued with full-time study, 151 had found work, and 43 were unemployed.

The true employment situation in the three areas cannot be appreciated from these figures until some further points are made. Firstly, as the next section will demonstrate, the overwhelming majority of these school leavers were seeking work locally. Secondly, 20 of the leavers were in part-time work. Thirdly, most of them did not consider these jobs as anything but a temporary measure. Fourthly, these figures do not allow for those students (our evidence suggests it might be as many as one-third of the number of leavers) who returned to school because they were unable to find suitable work.

For those leavers who did not get jobs, unemployment was often a lengthy experience. Only six of the unemployed leavers reported being out of work for less than four weeks and 24 reported being unemployed for more than 13 weeks, i.e. virtually the whole of the time since they left school.

Small country towns not only offer few jobs for school leavers; they also offer only a narrow range of them. The employed leavers commonly held positions in the categories craftsmen and foremen (36 respondents), shop assistant (30), clerical (27), personal and domestic service (15), farm and rural labourer (15) and labourer (13).

Evidence suggests that the smaller the town concerned and/or the more specialized its economic base, the narrower the range of jobs available. This was apparent in strong regional influences on the types of jobs attained. Clerical and shop-assistant positions were scarce in the Pilbara but craftsmen and foremen jobs were more readily available. Rural work was more likely to be on offer in the Outer Wheatbelt and labouring jobs were more common in the South-West.

A major difficulty relating to the type of work available for rural school leavers concerns the relative shortage of positions which offer a training component. Only 53 of the leavers reported having an apprenticeship or being involved in some form of job-training course. Of these, the vast majority were boys in the Pilbara who had apprenticeships with local mining companies. This illustrates the special relationship that exists in the Pilbara between male school leavers and the mining companies, which are the largest local employers.

Even those students whose parents own a farm or station faced the prospect of being unemployed. There were 58 school leavers who said they lived on a farm and 13 were unemployed. There were 30 unemployed leavers among the other 198 respondents. The notion that living on a farm may disguise the unemployment of school leavers was not supported in this study.

The school leavers were asked how many jobs they had sought since leaving school, and how many positions (both full-time and part-time) they had held in that time. There were 171 responses to the first question with 73 having applied for only one job, 34 for two and 17 for three. The remainder had applied for four or more positions and 10 leavers reported applying for 10 or more positions. There were 126 leavers who reported holding full-time jobs, of which 109 had held only one. Part-time work had been secured by 71 leavers of whom 44 had had one such job, 12 had had two, 10 three and one person had held 10 part-time jobs. Making the transition from a country school to a full-time job seems to have been a high risk business for these leavers. Further, about one-third of them seem to have had unsatisfactory school-to-work transition experiences in the sense that they either did not get full-time work for a long period or they tried several positions before settling into a job.

The leavers who were unemployed were asked to suggest ways governments could help young people when there were too few jobs available. No alternatives were given but 50 suggestions were received. These included economic actions to create jobs (13 mentions), the exclusion of married women from the workforce (11) and the provision of activities for the unemployed (10). Providing training schemes (7) and increasing the levels of unemployment benefit (5) were also mentioned but retiring people earlier (2), subsidizing employers (2) and reducing real wages (1) were not commonly listed. The unemployed leavers clearly have considered a

number of ways that their positions could be improved. The older leavers were expectedly more expansive with suggestions than were the younger leavers but the number of ideas put forward indicates something of the seriousness with which the unemployed school leavers regard their present situations.

The issue of restricted employment opportunities in rural areas has been raised first because it is a major limitation within which other issues must be considered. Without expanding the number and types of jobs available for rural school leavers, other actions to improve their transition from school to work will ultimately result in those leavers being better equipped to compete with one another for too few positions. Actions that might be taken to expand rural employment opportunities are one focus of the conclusions described in the next chapter.

5.2 Desire to remain in rural areas

The students involved in this study did not exhibit strong desires to leave the country and move into large cities. In the original questionnaire, 45% of respondents said they would prefer to work near home and 39% said they expected to work locally. For the 256 students making up the school leaver group, 54% said they would prefer to work locally and 57% expected that they would. Between an additional 10% and 15% of the respondents either hoped or expected to work in another country area. The school leavers, especially those leaving before the end of Year 12, were more likely to seek work locally and boys were more likely than girls to express this local preference. If they could not work locally they were likely to seek work in

Approximately 87% of the employed school leavers were working in their home town or district and another 7% were working in a nearby town or district. Only 5% of them had moved to a large city within Western Australia and only one leaver had moved interstate to work. This experience follows very closely the work-location aspirations these students expressed in the initial questionnaire. The high proportion finding work locally was consistent between all regions (Pilbara leavers with jobs were even more likely to have found them locally), sexes and levels of school from which they left. Clearly, most of the students who leave country schools before the end of Year 12 do not regard moving into cities as either inevitable or desirable.

Reflecting this strong desire to live and work in the local area, the group of leavers were much more likely than the non-leavers to say that living in the city would not improve their chances of getting the job they expected. It seems that the type of job they expect has been influenced to some extent by their desire to remain in their local area.

The students who were continuing with full-time education were much more likely to see city locations in their futures although many of them hoped to return to rural areas after completing their education and/or job training. It is not clear from this study whether the number of locally available jobs is a principal determinant of how many students leave school before Year 12 or whether those students not leaving school are seeking jobs, the training for which will take them away, even if temporarily, from their home.

The attractiveness of the local areas to the students surveyed has been commented on in the previous chapter. However, the school leavers were even more likely than the non-leavers to describe things that they liked about their home towns than they were to list things they disliked. The school leavers often said they liked their towns because they were clean and quiet and/or because they were friendly places in which they knew people. Their most commonly expressed criticisms of country towns were the lack of employment opportunities they offered and the social restrictions that their small sizes imposed.

There were only 17 out of the 150 employed leavers who were working on their parents farms. As expected, none of these were in the Pilbara and 14 of the group were males. This confirms comments made in Chapter 4 about farming being perceived as a pursuit for males. The students who were in this situation obviously would be seeking to continue living in a rural locality. Barry, aged 16 and living near a town in the South-West region of this study, had always intended to work on the family farm when he left school. His original intention was to leave after Year 10, complete an apprenticeship locally and then go onto the farm. However, during Year 10 he learned of the courses offered at agricultural high schools and decided to undertake a two-year programme in one of them before becoming a farmer.

The issue of students remaining in the local area or moving to the cities was one expressed most of the twelve case studies. It is one which exposes two opposing attitudes among parents. One group argues that incomplete local educational provision is a major reason why rural students tend to leave school earlier than their urban counterparts. For example, Andrew, aged 17 and living in

the Pilbara region, sought a local apprenticeship rather than move to Perth to go on studying. The other group maintains that growing up in small rural centres makes it important that their children spend at least two years of their education away in a larger centre. Some take this action even if that level of education is available locally. For example, Janice, from the Outer Wheatbelt region, left school at the end of Year 12 after her parents had sent her to a hostel in a larger town to complete Years 11 and 12.

Sometimes parental pressure is involved in keeping the child in the local community. Occasionally this takes the form of keeping the student at school when they would have preferred to move to a larger town for work. Sometimes, as in Debbie's case, it results in students leaving school and taking locally available work when they might have aspired to a higher status occupation. Some school leavers cite personal and family reasons for not wanting to leave the local area. Raeleen, aged 15, from the Outer Wheatbelt region, did not want to leave her mother or her boyfriend, so left school at the end of Year 10 even though no jobs were available to her locally and she faced the prospect of lengthy unemployment. All these reasons for a decision to remain in the local area are understandable and are the result of personal attitudes, in part conditioned by knowledge of what is available and, sometimes, by the experiences of other children.

These are factors over which schools, education departments or other bodies may have little influence. However, perhaps the real strength of the attraction rural areas have for many students is shown in the case of Janice, 17, and living in the Outer Wheatbelt. She completed Year 12 at a nearby school by living in the hostel provided and applied for a nurse's training position in Perth. Notification of her acceptance for this training was not received for two months, by which time she decided that she liked her job in a local store so much that the prospect of leaving home to begin this training had lost its appeal. Her former teachers were disappointed that her Year 12 results were 'only' being used in a local store. However she and her parents are happy with her present job.

What is clear is that many students in this study would be quite happy to remain in rural areas. The importance of locally available work is highlighted by this finding. So too is the importance of equipping students who will not find local work (or do not aspire to it) to live in larger urbanized communities in which they will either work or continue with study.

5.3 Desire to work and the means of attaining it

The students involved in this study indicated that the goal of full-time work, preferably involving a career, is their major aspiration when they leave school. Approximately 90% of the original sample said they would worry 'a lot' if they were unemployed after leaving school. The group who were actually unemployed when surveyed in April/May, 1979 were as likely as any in the sample to have said unemployment would worry them a lot. The impact of being out of work on the hopes of these leavers is quite evident. Asked how much being unemployed worried them, about 84% of these unemployed leavers said it worried them a lot, about 4% said it did not matter much and only one respondent indicated not being worried at all. These percentages are very similar to those obtained from all 256 school leavers, indicating that the unemployed leavers still want to work.

The unemployed leavers were also persistent in their search for occupations. Five or six months after leaving school only five of the 43 unemployed school leavers said they were not currently seeking work. All five were females, probably reflecting their acceptance of the unlikelihood of their getting a job in the reasonably near future. Only four of the respondents had not applied for a job for over 12 weeks and 31 had applied for jobs within the last four weeks. The types of jobs they were seeking ranged widely across the occupational scale but clerical (mainly for Years 11 and 12 leavers and for female leavers), personal and domestic (mainly female leavers) and labourer (solely male leavers) were the most commonly sought positions.

About 80% of the unemployed leavers were either receiving or had registered for unemployment benefits. Eight had not registered. Most retained some optimism about getting a job, because just over half said they thought they would be unemployed for only a few more months.

Another aspect of the enthusiasm of the unemployed school leaver to seek work was shown in their responses to questions about their regular activities. Approximately 42% reported occasionally doing voluntary community work, and almost half of the respondents reported looking for work either each day or once each week. Given the scarcity of positions in rural areas and the desire of this group to remain in their local communities, looking for work either daily or weekly probably represents an intense search.

The survey also showed very little evidence of parental disenchantment with their children's efforts to find jobs. Over 80% of these respondents reported their parents' attitude to their being unemployed as either supportive, sympathetic or at least tolerant. Only one respondent described her parents' attitude as critical of her. One boy said his parents were anxious about his financial state, four unemployed leavers said their parents were angry that they did not have jobs and one other said her parents did not care. However most parents were apparently supportive, sympathetic and concerned about the post-school experiences their children were having.

Students in the sample were frequently definite that they had made their choice of a job. Some 60% said they knew the job they wanted and 70% of the actual leavers gave this answer. Considering that students in Year 9, (that is, students generally below the minimum leaving age) made up 41% of the sample, these proportions seem high. However, about 45% of the school leavers said they left school because they had a job organized, the most common of seven possible responses to this quesion, so it would seem that certainty of occupational choice is a strong feature of this sample.

However, being definite about their job plans did not improve the leavers' chances of getting jobs. Of the leavers who said they knew the job they wanted, 21% were unemployed in April, 1979. The unemployed proportion of those 'trying to decide between jobs' was 18% and for with 'no idea', it was 33%. Those who continued with full-time study were much more likely to know the job they wanted - 43 of the 62 going on with study said they knew their future job while only six had said they had no idea about a future occupation.

In terms of the jobs they expected to get and would prefer, the leavers were much less likely than the non-leavers to name jobs in the upper professional, lower professional, managerial and self-employed categories. Conversely, they were much more likely to name jobs in the categories personal and domestic services and labourer. Unemployment had been the experience of those who named lower professional category jobs more often than those naming jobs in any other category. This may in part reflect unrealistic expectations on the part of the leaver and, also in part, the relative unavailability of such positions in country areas.

Given the desire to live and work in the local area, which is a feature of the overall sample, and of the school leaver group in particular, the availability of local jobs seems to have a powerful influence on students decisions to leave school. The reasons that the school leavers gave for their choice of jobs reinforced this finding. Asked to rate as Very Important, Important or Not Important eight reasons for choosing their job, the leavers were more likely than the non-leavers to rate 'well paid' as not important, the fact that the job is 'easy to get' as very important and that 'it would be hard to get any other job locally' as very important. They were less likely than the non-leavers to rate 'wanting a job helping others' as either important or very important. Unemployed leavers were more likely than employed leavers to have said the job being easy to get was very important and that wanting a job helping others was important or very important in their choice. The leavers were generally less idealistic in the reasons for choosing a job than the non-leavers. However, the unemployed leavers were more likely than any other group to have rated wanting a job helping others as the most important reason for their choice of job. This may indicate that those who enter the job market most idealistically may be least likely to succeed.

How much influence the desire to remain in a rural area has on job choice is not clear from these results. It may be the principal determinant. Alternatively, issues such as disenchantment with school and parental influence may have a greater impact on the occupational choices rural students make.

Given that the vast majority of the school leavers found work close to home, the ways in which they attained these positions could be interesting information for schools and community-based employment bodies. Previous research has indicated that rural students tend to seek job advice from family members of the same sex (Musgrave and Wind, 1978), that personal observation of jobs is often the most important source of careers advice (Dufty, 1973), that rural students are most likely to aspire to jobs in which they know people (McGaw, 1977) and that students make little use of the services of agencies such as the Commonwealth Employment Service (Malley and Kirally, 1978).

Three common ways of finding their jobs were reported by employed school leavers. These were making personal contact with employers (by 45% of respondents), through the personal contacts of relatives or friends (27%) and responding to newspaper advertisements (17%). Only 6% of respondents said they obtained their job through CES, although more may have been in contact with that agency. The

case studies confirmed these methods as the common experience of rural school leavers. Angela, aged 17, had lived all her life in a South-West town and obtained a clerical position in the town because her father 'heard there was a vacancy'. Alan, aged 17, obtained an apprenticeship with the local mining company. His father is a senior employee of the company.

The personal approach, either through contacts, responding to advertisements or by individual initiative was the most common way these school leavers obtained jobs. This information should have implications for careers preparatory work conducted by the schools. It may also indicate that schools could work in local communities in ways that would expand the jobs available and increase the willingness of local employers to employ school leavers. The information also suggests that agencies such as CES which are not able to maintain a permanent presence in most country towns are limited in their usefulness to these school leavers.

Perhaps a disturbing pattern is emerging. If students decide they want to work locally, they will aspire to jobs they know exist in their town. The availability of such jobs at the time they are ready to leave school is something over which they have very little control. If they have family contacts or considerable individual initiative they may secure jobs even where they did not appear to be available. Otherwise their aspirations will have locked them into leaving school and then left them with few prospects of getting work. If they are unable to move to another location (such as by living with relatives) and are unwilling to return to school, then their future may appear gloomy. Evidence in this study indicates that girls experience these sets of circumstances more commonly than boys and this matter will be taken up in more detail later in this chapter.

5.4 School preparation of students for work

There is a considerable body of research literature which argues that early school leavers are unlikely to have experienced much success at school and are unlikely to regard school as a very rewarding part of their lives. These reports suggest that early school leavers are more likely to regard school as a frustrating environment (Wright and Headlam, 1976) and are likely to rate school as boring and a complete waste of time (Poole and Simkin, 1976). Early school leavers tend to be less committed to academic goals and to lack motivation to continue at school which they see as rewarding only those students with academic ability. Sturman (1979) has suggested, from an extensive

review of other studies, that teacher perceptions of students' abilities are a major determinant of educational success and therefore retention at school. In rural schools, teachers may consider their populations to have already been 'creamed off' by larger, often city-located, schools or they may consider the abilities of their students in contexts different from those of their own experiences. These circumstances may increase the chances that teachers in rural schools will regard their students as less able than they may actually be.

Evidence in some of the case studies and in the survey data seems to support these conclusions. The leavers were less optimistic about their personal chances of success and commonly cited being tired of school as a major reason behind their decisions to leave. Several of the students interviewed, such as Angela, aged 17, from the South-West and Alan, aged 17, from the Pilbara, indicated that they felt the teachers were not very interested in them as people but were more interested in their subjects. There were also several cases where parents of the students interviewed were 'not happy' with one or more aspects of the school's operation and performance. This survey could not attempt to analyse, validate or refute these concerns but perhaps their very existence is the real issue. Students and parents did occasionally express disappointment at the little personal attention the schools seemed to give in teaching and in counselling. The importance of this issue lies in the fact that in most of these schools, access to continuous, on-site careers counselling is restricted, putting greater responsibility onto the classroom teachers. Presenting the opposite view though, one student interviewed, Anne, aged 18 from the Pilbara, and her parents were strongly supportive of their local school. They felt that being in a smaller school and getting more personal attention from teachers was a major factor in Anne succeeding in her Tertiary Admissions Examinations and being accepted into a tertiary institution.

Both the survey and the interview data indicated that students generally, and the school leavers in particular, were critical of the schools' efforts to prepare them for the transition from school to work. The group who left school were much more likely than those who stayed on to have received job advice from their family, from employers, from the Commonwealth Employment Service and from guidance officers. They were no more likely to have received job advice from teachers. Among the school leavers surveyed, 15 out of 194 who were working or seeking work, could not recall receiving any advice at school about jobs and 45 others felt the job advice they did receive was not useful. However, employed leavers were more likely to rate the advice they received as useful. Over 45% of respondents

said they could not remember the school having given them any advice about the possibility of being unemployed or how to cope with such a situation. Overall, about 80% of the school leavers felt that schools should spend more time preparing their students for jobs. This response was consistent across regions, sexes and Year levels.

Roslyn, aged 18, from the Outer Wheatbelt, was critical of the fact that she was given no advice or help in how to present herself for a job interview or how to apply for unemployment benefits. Coral, aged 16, was at school in the Outer Wheatbelt during this study but had subsequently re-enrolled in a suburban school. She drew some strong contrasts between the work-experience programme and counselling services in her present school and the absence of these activities in her former school.

Only 5% of the school leavers indicated that they had sought careers or work information from the Commonwealth Employment Service before they left school. Further, 35% of the leavers who were unemployed in April/May, 1979 said they never went to the CES office. These two statistics are a depressing commentary on the usefulness of this government agency for students in or from rural schools.

The students in this study rely heavily on family and community-based information in the choice of occupations. They live in communities which present relatively narrow ranges of occupational models. Some case studies indicated they may also lack adequate knowledge about provisions which exist for further study and assistance that might be available to them. Several interviewees who left school at the end of Year 10 said having to go away from home to continue at school was an important factor in their decision to leave school. When questioned further, none knew of the existence of the Isolated Students Matriculation Scheme (ISMS) through which they might have been able to continue at school without leaving home. In one case, Don, aged 16, from the Pilbara, his parents cited financial problems as an important reason for their not sending him on to Year 11 in Perth or Geraldton. They were aware of the Allowance for Isolated Students scheme but had calculated their likely benefit at $500 per annum - too low to allow the decision to go on to be made. Their actual situation was such that the benefit would have been close to $1 500 per annum - a level at which they felt they could have afforded to send Don away to school. Current information on these provisions must be available to students and their parents if they are expected to make reasonable career and education choices.

Deficiencies in career and educational information and counselling services and the restricted range of local job models can contribute to many rural students making career decisions in unplanned and often uninformed ways. Frequently the jobs these students aspire to are quite unrealistic, given their achievement levels, and often students know very little about what jobs actually entail. For example, Michael, aged 17 from the Pilbara, said he really wanted to be an engineer but, when questioned, knew very little about what engineers did or the educational qualifications required. The school leavers in this study commonly named the same job as both their preferred and expected occupation This may reflect an unrealistic appraisal of the employment market and their ability to compete in it. However, such a comment must accept that these leavers commonly got exactly that job. Frequently they knew, because it had been 'lined up' for some time, that they were going to do that sort of work. Notwithstanding this finding, the survey did indicate that those leavers who were most idealistic or uninformed about their choice of job or their reasons for such a choice, were most likely to be unemployed.

Schools have considerable potential for undertaking valuable and rewarding work in the transition-to-work area. Several interviewees spoke enthusiastically about the effect of work experience programmes, discussions with guidance officers and talks from visiting speakers on their career decisions. Parents of several interviewees acknowledged that their schools were now doing more for students in these areas but also urged continuing developments in transition-related activities. Three important points were raised in this context. Firstly, closer relationships were felt to be needed between schools' teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills and the requirements of employers in those matters. Secondly, schools were urged to undertake follow-up work with recent leavers for two purposes - to further assist them with the transition to work and to determine the actual experiences of school leavers to use as one basis for the school's future transition activities. Thirdly, schools were urged to assist those students who would move to larger centres in search of employment. These matters will be considered again in the next chapter.

5.5 School performance of the leavers

The 256 school leavers who responded to the second questionnaire consisted of 6% from Year 9 in 1978, 46% from Year 10, 28% from Year 11 and 20% from Year 12. Of this group, 62 (28 of whom had been in Year 12 in 1978) went on with full-time study. Only 20% of the Year 9 and 10

students, and less than 10% of the Year 11 students had continued with full-time study. Completing secondary education seems the preparation most likely to lead to further study. Leavers from Year 11 were either undertaking terminal courses or regarded themselves as having little chance of successfully completing Year 12.

During the initial questionnaire survey, some teachers in the schools expressed a view that more academically able students were now leaving school before the end of Year 12 to take up local jobs as they became available. In an attempt to validate this impression, achievement data relating to the levels and grades obtained by Year 9 and 10 students in their Achievement Certificate 'core' subjects were collected and compared with the State-wide figures for these two age groups. This data, collected for the 113 Year 9 and 10 leavers, indicated that the leavers were mainly from the lower half of the population in terms of achievement. The relevant information is set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1. ACHIEVEMENT DATA, YEAR 9 AND 10 STUDENTS

	Advanced, Intermediate Credit (Advanced) (Ordinary)	Intermediate Basic Pass (Elementary) (Basic)	No Award	Sample Size
State-wide	56	56	2%	112
English	34	77	2%	113
Social Studies	28	80	5%	113
Science	22	81	3%	113
(Maths)	(31)	(78)	4%	113

This table shows that the core subject achievement levels of the Year 9 and 10 leavers is significantly below that expected of a randomly drawn sample of students in those Years from throughout the State. Students who studied at Basic level are over-represented among the leavers and students who studied at Advanced level are under-represented. This data does not present evidence to confirm the trend teachers reported - that more able students now more commonly leave school as jobs become available. Such a development would make it harder for less able students to

compete in the local job market and could result in those students staying at school longer than they previously had. This evidence suggests that the lower ability student is still the most common leaver at the Year 10 level. However, there are some individual cases of very able students leaving school after Year 10 to take up local jobs. Their numbers are not large and it would be rash to conclude that they indicate a trend without comparative data over a number of years. Teachers reporting this impression, but having no real evidence to confirm or refute it, lends further weight to the idea that schools should follow-up their recent leavers to determine what jobs they got and their post-school experiences. Maintaining current data on the impact of present economic conditions on the nature and size of their enrolment, especially in Years 11 and 12, could also be a useful activity for schools.

The points raised in the previous section about school leavers tending to be less satisfied at school and tending to lack motivation at school should be borne in mind in this discussion of the performance of the school leavers. The leavers commonly reported being tired and fed up with school, not being able to get on with the teachers and feeling that they had never really been successful at school. They were also more likely than the non-leaver group to be pessimistic about their chances of succeeding in life and were more apprehensive about their futures. Many of those interviewed felt their teachers were not really interested in them and only one commented favourably on the amount of individual attention she received at school.

It has already been stated that the survey data suggest that students who leave school before the end of Year 12 are unlikely to proceed beyond secondary education. Their responses to later questions indicated that such leavers were most likely to reject any notion that they might later return to full-time education. Yet they were likely to agree that further education would improve their chances of getting a job or a better job. Apparently, secondary schools, as presently constituted, are not attractive to them. Courses of a more vocational or interest-oriented nature and changes in the organization of schools and the learning strategies used by them may be needed if these early leavers, who predominantly want to continue living in rural areas, are not to remain locked into initial job choices or recurring periods of unemployment.

5.6 Reasons for leaving school

In reviewing the reasons given by students for their leaving school, the negative perceptions these students had of schools, which have been reported in previous

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sections, are relevant. For example, Anne, aged 17, from the South-West, said that by the end of Year 11 she was tired of school. Michael, 18, from the Pilbara, found school boring and the teachers uncaring.

The students who did not continue with full-time study were asked to indicate which of a variety of reasons explained their leaving school. Not liking school drew 46 responses. No sex or regional influences were evident but leavers from Year 11 most commonly gave this response. Wanting to make money attracted 59 responses. This response was more likely to be given by leavers from Years 10 and 11. Having a job lined up was selected by 85 respondents. This response was more likely to have been given by males and leavers from Years 9 and 10. Having friends who were leaving school attracted only 5 respondents. However, leaving school because they felt they would not be good enough to successfully continue into Year 11 or Year 12 was selected by 42 respondents.

There were several cases where a family's financial situation was important in the decision to leave school. Significantly more of the leavers than the non-leavers had reported having fathers who were retired or on pensions and having mothers who did not work. In these cases, family finances may have been relevant. In some cases these circumstances were compounded by broken home situations. However, while financial reasons were occasionally behind decisions to leave school, the interviews indicated that this factor was more likely to be used to justify a decision to leave school which had already been taken.

While the financial capacity of the family may not have been a very important reason for leaving school, there was a strong relationship between parents' employment and length of schooling. Generally, the higher socio-economic status occupations parents held, the less likely the student was to leave school early. This relationship was evident between length of schooling and father's occupation but was strongest between length of schooling and mother's occupation. Significantly fewer leavers than non-leavers had mothers working in professional or managerial type jobs. Students whose mothers had high status jobs, even if only part-time, were most likely to want to complete secondary education and continue to tertiary studies.

A job being available in the local area was the most important reason for students deciding to leave school. In small towns jobs suitable for early school leavers usually do not cover a very wide range. The leavers had usually chosen an occupation from among the restricted choices available and either sought such a position directly or through family contacts or had simply hoped such a job would

be available. Kathryn, aged 15, from the South-West, knew people in cleaning jobs in the town and felt such a job would be preferable to school. She left before the end of Year 10 to take such a job but was put off a month later. Now, with no completed Achievement Certificate and no possibility of moving to a larger town, she faces the prospect of lengthy unemployment.

Disenchantment with school was a major reason for many of these leavers deciding to leave school. They commonly expected to be unemployed and often felt ill-equipped to succeed in life but they left school anyway. Those leavers who were unemployed in April, 1979 were much more likely than those who had jobs to have expected to be unemployed for most of 1979. They were going to leave school even though they expected to be unemployed for a significant period. The leavers were more likely than the non-leavers to rate their chances of succeeding in life as only 'fair' or 'not much good', and those unemployed leavers were the most likely to have given these responses. Some 27 of the 43 unemployed responded this way indicating that they did not regard themselves as leaving school equipped to succeed in life. How much this feeling stems from perceived lack of success while at school would be an interesting study.

The responses to questions asking how they might improve their position in life and whether they would return to full-time education indicate something of the leavers attitudes to school. Employed leavers were asked what might improve their chance of getting preferred jobs. Most (49) said ' return to school' and 34 said by 'continue to a higher level of education'. Unemployed leavers were asked what would improve their chances of getting a job. Of 55 suggestions made, 11 were 'return to school' and five were 'continue to a higher level of education'. However, when asked whether they would return to full-time study in the future, only 29 out of 185 thought it either likely or very likely. 121 leavers thought it not likely or very unlikely and the other 35 did not know. Education was regarded as a way to 'get on' but few of these leavers wanted to return to it, at least on a full-time basis.

Role models and parental aspirations seem to have considerable importance in school-leaving decisions. Teachers generally commented that many of their students seemed to set their sights too low - specifically to what is available locally. This they see as resulting in waste of ability and lack of motivation. Conversely, there are examples such as the case of Roslyn, 18, from the Outer Wheatbelt, where parents have occupational aspirations for

their children which are unrealistically high in terms of their abilities. The importance of comprehensive and relevant transition policies, careers education information and counselling and special activities such as work experience designed to broaden the occupational knowledge of rural students are all highlighted by these circumstances.

5.7 Different situations of male and female leavers

In some ways it could be argued that the extent of the differences between the situations faced by male and female school leavers is the most graphic finding of this study. The strong sex stereotyping of occupational choices of these students has been commented on in the previous chapter. It is not too much of a generalization to say that boys wanted to be professionals or craftsmen and foremen and girls wanted clerical, shop assistant or personal and domestic service positions. Perhaps the clearest sex influence can be seen in the anticipation of farm work. In the initial survey less than 1% of the girls living on farms owned or managed by their parents said they expected to work on those farms when they left school. In comparison, over 20% of the boys in the same family situation expected to work on the farm when they left school. When the survey data from the employed school leavers was collected, these sex stereotypes appeared strongly in the leavers' occupational attainments. This study indicates that efforts to reduce sex barriers to certain types of employment may have had very little impact in rural communities and among rural families.

If it can be argued that rural school leavers are in a worse position in terms of the number and range of positions available than are students leaving urban schools, then it can be demonstrated quite clearly that female leavers from rural schools are in a much worse position than their male counterparts. In the original sample there were more girls than boys in Years 11 and 12. This characteristic has emerged in other research studies (Sturman, 1979) but has often been coupled with a finding that these females are less likely than males to aspire to tertiary studies. In this sample, girls were more likely than boys to hope to continue on to tertiary education. This may be a characteristic of rural females influenced by the severe limitations on occupational opportunities available to them locally.

The females in this study were more likely than boys to expect to get jobs different (and usually of lower status) from those they would prefer. For girls, a decision to remain in the local area would greatly restrict their job expectations - mainly because there were fewer jobs available to them locally and those available came within a narrow occupational range. Consistent with this finding,

girls were more likely than boys to expect to have to leave their local area to get work. For girls, the anticipated choice they would face when they left school was to remain locally and try for the few clerical or sales jobs that might arise (or be unemployed) or to leave and seek work elsewhere. Decisions of the second type gave some job choice, decisions of the first type probably gave none.

The actual situations that developed for those who left school confirm these anticipations. There were 198 employed leavers who responded to our second questionnaire - 101 were females. The employment attainments of these leavers is shown in the following table.

TABLE 2. EMPLOYMENT ATTAINMENTS OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

Employment Status	Male		Female	
	No.	%	No.	%
Employed, Full-time	86	89	49	48
Employed, Part-time	5	5	15	15
Unemployed	6	6	37	37
Total	97	100	101	100

Female leavers were clearly less successful than males in finding employment. Most male school leavers found full-time work and, as has been reported earlier, most found it locally. Less than 50% of female leavers found full-time work. Part-time work did seem to offer them greater opportunities than it did for males, but these part-time jobs rarely constituted a career occupation. The figures portray a picture which would not be overly distorted by the conclusion that rural youth unemployment is a female phenomenon.

Reflecting these figures, the female leavers were more likely than the males to express pessimistic views of their futures. They were more likely to expect to be unemployed for long periods and were more likely to have given up (even if temporarily) the search for employment. All five unemployed respondents who said they were not currently seeking jobs were females. The others were more desperate than boys to get work. They more commonly gave responses indicating that they would go anywhere and do anything if it

meant getting a job. The females were also less likely than the males to regard the jobs they had as permanent. Such a finding is understandable considering the difficulties they had experienced getting work and is also related to the larger number of females with part-time jobs.

Two girls who were interviewed during the case studies indicated something of the extent to which rural opportunities for females are restricted. Anne, aged 18, from the Pilbara, wanted to work locally for a year or two after she finished Year 12 before continuing with a tertiary course. However, after putting her name down at every store in town she 'couldn't even get a cleaning job' locally so decided to go straight on with her studies. Roslyn, aged 18, from a town in the Outer Wheatbelt, originally wanted a hairdressing apprenticeship in that town after completing Year 10. However, none were available so she went on to Years 11 and 12 but was unsuccessful in her examinations. Again few jobs were available and certainly no apprenticeships.

A major factor explaining the absence of full-time job opportunities for females is the relative unavailability of apprenticeships for them. Of the 97 males who responded to the second questionnaire, 40 said they had full-time jobs as apprentices. Only four of the 101 female respondents gave similar answers.

Why does this situation develop whereby female school leavers find themselves in a much more serious situation than do their male counterparts? Some research (such as that of Encel, MacKenzie and Tebbut, 1974) claims that parents contribute to the problem because they have low levels of aspirations for their daughters and are less likely to encourage them to stay at school. Sturman (1979) has argued that rural areas lack examples of women in leadership roles and that schools compound this situation because they have few women in senior positions. Girls are not encouraged, therefore, to be ambitious, to seek academic courses or to aspire to tertiary qualifications. Additionally, girls may find it difficult to leave their local communities either to continue their education, to train for a job or to actually get work. If they are more 'tied' to their town, then the problem focuses on the diminishing local job opportunities for female school leavers. Factors which have produced this decline (and which are probably still contributing to it) include automation, rationalization of community services and the increasing participation of married women in the workforce.

The restriction of employment opportunities in rural areas for young women is a crucial issue to emerge in this study. Its solution will not be simple and no one department or organization can itself expect to be effective in dealing with it. Parents, teachers, employers, governments at all levels and employees' organizations must all take some part in dealing with this problem, the full extent of which is unclear because of the number of girls who return to school or do not apply for unemployment benefits.

5.8 Regional influences

The information relating to both the aspirations and the experiences of both the potential and actual school leavers reveals many similarities between the three study areas. For example, similar proportions of the students were definite that they had made their choice of occupation. Similar proportions in all areas expected to be unemployed when they left school. The leavers gave similar reasons for leaving school regardless of the area they came from and the area had little influence on their expressed likelihood of returning to full-time education at a later date. The similarities in their responses probably reflect the similar general situations in which school leavers in rural areas of Western Australia find themselves.

Despite the similarities in the questionnaire responses, there were several important matters in which the area seems to have had a systematic influence on the information collected. These differences may be explained by reference to the social, historical and economic contexts of the areas themselves and to the nature of the educational provision made in each of them.

These three areas differ in their social and historical contexts. The Pilbara towns are much more recent settlements than those in the other two areas and have been characterized by greater population mobility. Pilbara students were more likely than those in the other areas to have been to more than one secondary school. Proportionally greater numbers of Pilbara leavers reported their families moving house between the two surveys.

Pilbara respondents were least likely to report parental influence or their families being involved as important reasons behind their occupational choices. There are few family businesses in the Pilbara and no family farms. Only 6% of employed Pilbara leavers said parents or family were important in their getting a job. The corresponding figure in the Outer Wheatbelt was 34%. Pilbara leavers were less likely to enjoy living where they did and were less likely to regard their towns as 'the country'. They felt less attachment to their local areas and were more likely to report wanting to leave there when they were looking for work.

The different economic circumstances of the three areas also had an influence on the survey responses. The dominance of iron-ore mining and related activities in the Pilbara (and consequently the economic dominance of the mining companies) meant that apprenticeships and craftsmen and foremen category jobs were the most commonly sought. The leavers in the Pilbara were much more likely than those from the other areas to have sought job advice from employers. Female leavers were arguably in the worst position in the Pilbara. The few jobs available were almost exclusively in the sales- and personal- or domestic-assistant categories.

Levels of unemployment among school leavers also showed regional influences. In the South-West, 30% of the job-seeking leavers were out of work while the Pilbara and Outer Wheatbelt figures were 21% and 17% respectively. There were more part-time jobs available in the South-West, probably showing the influence of a more active tourist industry.

The educational provision and its relationship with other characteristics of the area also had some influence on the responses. In the Pilbara there has been greater development of alternative Year 11 courses than in the other areas. Students from the Pilbara were much more likely to indicate they would leave school after Year 11 than were students from the other areas. Completing Year 12 was regarded by students as not necessary to work locally and fewer of them indicated that they wanted to go to that level. The Pilbara students were the least likely to regard the school as being effective in school-to-work transition. Only 12% of them rated school job advice as very useful (the corresponding figure in the other areas was 20%) and only 46% (compared with 65%) of them could recall receiving any advice while at school about coping with unemployment. These responses may reflect a situation in the Pilbara where teachers have less familiarity with the communities and so may not present material considered to have much local relevance. The issue of high teacher mobility may also contribute to this problem.

The economic, social and educational backgrounds of communities do seem to have important influences on both the aspirations and experiences of school leavers. One conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that school staffs must be familiar with the characteristics of their communities if they are to contribute more effectively to the transitions their students will make from school to work.

5.9 Conclusion

The surveys of the students and school leavers, and information gained during the case studies, has provided several insights into the aspirations, attitudes and post-school experiences of those students who leave country schools to seek work. In some ways those attitudes and aspirations set them apart from their peers who do not leave school. For example, the school leavers generally aspire to lower status jobs which are available locally and tend to have greater adherence to their local communities. Their experiences after leaving school have raised a number of important issues on which remedial action could focus.

Large numbers of students in rural schools want to live and work in their local communities but there are relatively few job opportunities in rural areas for them. If this desire predominates, the leavers must choose from the restricted number and range of jobs available locally. Such a choice may be most effectively exercised when they have personal or family contacts which will ensure them a job. If the students decide to choose from among the broader job opportunities in urban centres, then they must be equipped to live and work in these places. These matters have implications for schools, employers, communities and governments.

The next chapter will discuss some of these implications and propose some courses of action that schools and the Education Department could consider.

6. CONCLUSIONS AND POSSIBLE COURSES OF ACTION

6.1 Conclusions

This study has shown that substantial numbers of rural adolescents want to remain in country areas after they leave school. Approximately 55% of the original sample indicated that they wanted to work either near their homes or in another country district. These students clearly do not regard moving to a large urban area as a desirable consequence of leaving school, although many of them may come to see it as inevitable. This conclusion may have been affected by the ages and limited past experiences of the students surveyed. Most of them had never lived in a city and so their responses may reflect any apprehensions they felt about living there. Consistent with this, the ages of these students may have increased their hesitancy about moving to the city, a decision which would probably mean having to leave home.

The desire to remain in their local areas was an even more obvious characteristic of the students who actually left school. Approximately 87% of the leavers who were employed in April/May, 1979 were working in the immediate vicinity of their homes. It seems likely that the number and type of jobs that are available locally is a major determinant of the number of students who leave rural schools each year. Such a finding may be confirmed by survey data indicating that 45% of the school leavers said they left because a job was available.

This situation gives rise to a number of circumstances. One is that a number of students will leave school because they are unable or unwilling to continue (or are unable or unwilling to leave home, which is necessary to continue) but will not be certain of getting a job. Evidence in this study indicates that this situation could involve one-third of all the leavers and that, of this group, half may be unable to secure jobs over a lengthy period of time. Another is that the potential school-leaver population may be reduced considerably by students returning to school because they have been unsuccessful in finding a job. A third point is that some students may expect to get a certain type of job locally when they leave school (they may even consider it to be 'lined up') and choose their school courses and work accordingly. If the situation alters, (such as the job not eventuating or the leaver being put off soon after beginning), then that school leaver faces a very difficult situation and may be virtually unemployable in the local community.

A second conclusion of this study is that, bearing in mind their attachment to their local areas, the school leavers are keen to get jobs. Evidence suggests that about 50% of the work-seeking leavers go virtually straight into jobs and, perhaps more importantly, stay in them for several months. This group commonly consider these to be their permanent jobs. A further 25% of the leavers get work within three months of leaving school and the remainder continue to be unemployed at least for most of the first half of the following year. This means that about 50% of these leavers have some experience of unemployment and, for between 20% and 25%, that experience stretches over several months.

Despite being in that situation for long periods, it seems that the unemployed leavers retain some optimism that they will get a job. They continue the regular search for a job, they claim to be considerably worried about being unemployed, and they report their parents as being sympathetic or tolerant of their positions. What is clear is that this group has not abandoned the ambition of work and a career. Within the limitation of being unable (or unwilling) to leave their homes, these people are keen to get jobs and be seen as fully contributive members of society.

Girls face a much more difficult situation than do boys when they leave rural schools to seek work. They are much more likely than boys to be unemployed and have a greater chance of being out of work for long periods of time. They tend to have lower educational and occupational aspirations than boys and tend to have access to only a narrow range of jobs which have been regarded as 'traditionally female' occupations. There are few employment-training or apprenticeship schemes which cater for girls in rural areas, and the general constriction of job opportunities for youths in rural centres seems to have had greatest impact on the positions that girls are most likely to be seeking. Staying at school longer than they intended (and possibly longer than their abilities allow them to cope with) seems to be a girls' more than a boys' reaction to the unemployment situation and probably follows from their much more precarious employment position. Girls seem more likely than boys to consider a move to a large urban area to be an economic necessity. This situation may have existed in the past but was able to be largely ignored when jobs for girls were relatively plentiful in the cities. However, now that unemployment is an increasingly common prospect for girls in urban areas, moving to the city is not an easy remedy for

this problem. The general situation that girls commonly experience on leaving school in rural areas is so serious, and may have such fundamental implications for governments and for our society, that it should be a major focus of any initial action taken by the Education Department in the area of transition from school to work.

The survey data indicated that a substantial number of these students were disenchanted with school. This comment applies particularly to the group who left school and the feeling was confirmed in a number of the interviews. Many of the school leavers gave 'tired of school' as a major reason behind their decisions to leave. Several students said in interviews that they felt their teachers were not really concerned about them as individuals and that they could not remember getting much individual attention, either with their classwork or with careers counselling. Many of the actual leavers indicated that they had a reasonable expectation of being unemployed if they left school. Yet they left anyway.

The school leavers who had jobs were most likely to specify 'return to school' or 'more education at a higher level' as ways that they could improve the jobs they had. Similarly, the unemployed leavers most commonly gave the same two answers to a question asking how they could improve their chances of getting a job. They regard education as a major factor in occupational success and status attainment. Despite this, both groups (but more particularly the unemployed leavers) did not indicate any great enthusiasm for returning to full-time education at any time in the future. It is possible that many of these school leavers will eventually return to education. However, at the time of the second survey, seeing education as a vehicle for self-improvement had not convinced them of the wisdom of returning to it, on a full-time basis at least.

It seems that what may be required is a thorough review of the purposes, organizations and values of secondary education, at least as it is provided in rural areas. A broadening is suggested of the values rewarded by schools beyond the pursuit of academic goals. Secondary schools may need to give more attention to pastoral care in their aims and organization. They may need more flexibility in the rules they apply, the programmes that they offer and the ways in which they teach students. A closer association of the school with its community may be called for and the development of greater mutual understandings of their respective purposes, circumstances and limitations may also need consideration. A broader range of courses may be needed, especially to expand the job-training opportunities in rural areas and to cater for the special needs of both employed and unemployed school leavers.

Another group of conclusions, closely related to those just described, focus on the inadequacy of present efforts in the area of the transition from school to work. The data collected in this study point up the difficulties that students can have in making the transition from school to adult life and portray something of the variety of situations that students can experience when they leave schools in rural areas. Schools should be aware of the situations their leavers may confront and they would find information describing the experiences, successes and problems faced by former leavers a valuable base on which to plan their transition-related activities.

Students from rural schools either seek work locally, move to larger population centres to find jobs or continue with their studies. Schools have some responsibility for ensuring their students are adequately equipped to make these sorts of transitions. Consequently, transition initiatives must be broader than careers advice, counselling and information on how to present yourself for a job. Issues, such as dealing with unemployment, assessing the supply and demand for various occupations, finding out what agencies exist to assist the job seeker and advice on coping with life in a big city, should all be addressed by schools through transition activities. A major component of the schools' efforts to assist the transition of students from school to work should be in determining the skills and attitudes employers require of school leavers. These requirements will be difficult to specify and even more difficult to obtain concensus about. However, they are such an important part of current criticisms of the work of schools that they must be addressed.

This study has indicated that rural students seem to go about the task of finding jobs in distinctive ways. Direct contact and family associations are major parts of the rural job-seeking strategies. These have implications for the careers-advice component of the schools' work in the transition area. However, schools must bear in mind that some students will be seeking work in urban situations and they will need to be adequately equipped to deal with these situations.

Information gathered in this study is critical of schools' present efforts in presentating careers information to students. Students commonly cited family members and employers as giving the most valuable advice about employment. These groups normally do not have the same systematic access to current careers information as do teachers and agencies such as the Commonwealth Employment Service. So if they are the sources rural students are most

likely to use, it would probably be wise for schools to involve parents, employers and community agencies in their overall careers information and counselling procedures. The case studies, in particular, indicated some lack of knowledge about requirements for specific careers, about educational provisions that might be appropriate for rural students, and about the types of assistance available to students and their parents. This type of information should be included in the provision of careers information and counselling activities of schools and procedures should be adopted to ensure the continuing accuracy of the information.

A finding which has an over-riding impact on all the other conclusions is that job opportunities are very restricted in rural areas. This comment applies both to the sheer number of positions available and to the range of positions offered. Locally, school leavers are likely to face a situation of too few jobs for the people wanting work and even fewer jobs for which they have interest and ability. The smaller the town in which the leaver is seeking work, (or the more specialized are its economic activities) the more difficult the situation is likely to be.

Put quite simply, there is an urgent need for more jobs to be created in rural areas, especially jobs which are appropriate for recent school leavers. The roles that governments can play in such job-creation activities and the responsibilities that local bodies and individuals may have in such schemes will need careful consideration. It may require an existing agency to adopt a fostering and co-ordinating role in such ventures, or possibly the creation of a new body to undertake this task. The urgent need for rural areas to offer more jobs which have some training or apprenticeship component is evident in this study.

Various government policies have an impact on the availability of work in rural areas. Actions to stimulate rural employment opportunities, especially for school leavers, may require extensive reviews of those policies. Some of the areas of government activity which may warrant attention include decentralization and development policies, taxation and employment-incentive policies, policies relating to equality of opportunity and policies focusing on such broader issues as manpower planning. These reviews should investigate not only the impact of the present policies but whether the processes by which they are implemented are contributing to the creation of employment opportunities in rural areas.

The findings of this study paint a rather depressing picture. Certainly the dimensions of the problem are such that action needs to be taken by a variety of bodies at various levels. Job-creation schemes require government initiative but, to be turned into locally practical activities, they also require local commitment. These sorts of policies and ventures really constitute a developmental approach to actions that could deal with the problems faced by rural youths when they leave school. As such, they are likely to take longer and be more difficult to achieve. At more of a remedial level, there are specific actions that schools, education authorities, parents, employers and local organizations could take. These may be more readily implemented but, without developmental action of the type referred to above, it must be recognized that their impact on the overall unemployment situation will be limited.

6.2 Possible Courses of Action

Many recommendations could emerge from a study of this sort. They could cover a wide range of government and community agencies and activities. Making recommendations on these matters is beyond the scope of this study, but several of them have been discussed in the previous section. This section poses courses of action which schools and/or the Education Department could consider.

(1) The situations of female school leavers.

Schools must continue their efforts to break down the degree of influence that a student's sex has on his or her occupational aspirations. Careers counselling for girls must be of an expansive and broadening type. Schools must enlist the support of parents, employers, employees' associations and other local agencies to promote the concept that girls and boys should be able to freely choose from among all the job opportunities available. Workshop and seminar activities, publicity for women in leadership roles and exchanges of girls between rural and urban schools are examples of actions that could be taken.

(2) Review of rural secondary schools.

The Education Department should consider undertaking a review of rural secondary schools. Such a review could consider the following:

(a) The desirability and practicability of reducing the subject orientation of secondary schools.

(b) The possibility of making admission and attendance criteria more flexible so that adults and recent leavers might be able to attend on a part-time basis.

(c) The broadening of courses provided. These might include more courses of a vocational or interest-related sort which may not need to be year-long and may not require a 'teacher with a class' strategy to be adopted automatically. The utilization of community expertise and facilities and making use of flexible organizations could be features of schools that emerge from such developments.

(d) The opportunities that are presented for reducing the mobility of teachers (especially those in promotional positions) in rural schools.

(e) The possibilities of providing Years 11 and 12 courses in more rural localities. One strategy could be to give schools access to the services of ISMS and provide teacher-tutors on ite.

(3) Schools' transition activities

(a) The Education Department should encourage and assist schools to develop their own transition policies. These would detail the types of activities that schools should provide for students in order to facilitate a smooth transition of the students from school to the variety of situations they will experience in adult life, including work, further study, in different communities and developing leisure interests. Such assistance might include the development of relevant policy and discussion papers, the conduct of workshops and seminars and the provision of advisory support.

(b) A major purpose of a transition policy statement should be to co-ordinate the variety of transition-related activities that might be taking place in the school. Another could be to ensure that school activities complement (or are complemented by) other programmes run by government or local agencies. It should therefore, address itself to the relationship between the school's actions and those of other groups and should detail the relationships between the various components of school action such as the provision of careers information and the conduct of work experience.

(c) Schools should conduct their own inquiries to ascertain the experiences of former school leavers. Information concerning how many obtained jobs, of what types, how many were unemployed, how many left the district, where

they went, and how many continued with study would be valuable as a data base upon which a school's transition policy could be built. This task could be co-ordinated by the youth education officer or careers adviser and might involve a school's clerical assistant in the collection of the information.

(d) Schools should be encouraged to maintain comprehensive and accurate information about the full range of careers that might be sought by their students. Procedures for maintaining the currency, range and use of these materials should be an important area addressed in all schools' transition policies. Schools, or education authorities on their behalf, should establish arrangements with agencies, such as the Department of Employment and Youth Affairs, to ensure they receive current information on a wide range of occupations as well as the latest data on supply and demand for those jobs. Schools should adopt procedures whereby this information is used by students regularly and in ways which both promote an active interest in occupations and a sense of the relevance of curricula to those positions. Such an approach implies that Youth Education Officers and careers advisers may have co-ordinatory responsibilities in this area, but the onus will be on all teachers to promote careers awareness and responsible decision making among their students. Access to this careers information should also be provided for parents and community groups (such as local employers) so that the community as well as the school becomes involved in the employment prospects of its youth.

(e) As a part of their transition activities, schools should maintain accurate information about further education programmes which may be appropriate for their students. This information could include details about ISMS courses, technical courses and correspondence programmes such as those provided by the Technical Extension Service and the external studies departments of tertiary institutions. Additionally, this package of information should include accurate details of scholarships and allowances for which students or their parents may be eligible. In terms of the compilation and maintenance of this data, a role is suggested for the guidance officer, youth education officer or careers adviser, but the utilization of the material should be a responsibility of all teachers.

97080—6

(f) Work experience can contribute to the relevance of the school curricula, the breaking down of sex stereotyping and sex-related prejudices in occupational attainment and reducing the apprehensions rural students may have about moving to cities to obtain jobs. As such, it should be available for all students at least once in their secondary schooling. The aims of these programmes must be balanced between confirming an occupational decision and broadening the experiences on which a decision will ultimately be made.

(4) The need for further research.

(a) Follow-up studies are needed to supplement, confirm or refute tentative conclusions reached in this report. In particular, research is needed which will assess the impact of local job availability on students' decisions to leave school prior to the end of Year 12. Related inquiries could also focus on the extent to which retention in rural schools is explained by a local shortage of jobs and the extent to which students' curricula choices and study habits are conditioned by early job decisions.

(b) Further research is needed into the dimensions of the difficulties facing female school leavers in rural areas. Such an inquiry should attempt some assessment of the roles schools, parents, employers, employees' bodies and communities generally play in conditioning the occupational aspirations of girls.

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APPENDIX A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDY AREAS

Part A: General Characteristics

1. General description of the study area, indicating the distinctive features i.e., physical, geographic, social, historical, ethnic etc. (Main population centres and service centres should also be identified and described and located on a map of the area.)

2. General description of features of the local economy, with particular reference to

2.1 the major employers and industries in the area

2.2 indications of trends in industrial development or decline in the area

2.3 present and future employment opportunity in the area, particularly as regards future school-leavers.

Part B: Social Indicators Based on Census Information

1. Population

1.1 Number of males and females in 1966 and 1976 Censuses.

1.2 Ages

Numbers of males and females in 5 year age groupings from 0-65 years + with sub-totals for less than 15 years, 15-24 years and 25-65+ years.

1.3 Use of English language

Total population using English only
Total population using English and other languages.
Total population using no English

1.4 Marital status

Number of males and females in the following categories:

Never married under 15
Never married 15 and over
Now married
Separated, divorced or widowed

1.5 Number of persons in family

Total number of families in private dwellings
Number of families of 5 or more persons

2. Population

2.1 Occupational status

Number of males and females in the labour force
In the labour force but unemployed
Aged 15 years or more but not in the labour force

2.2 Age of labour force

Number of males and females aged 15-19 and in the labour force
Aged 20-24 years and in the labour force

2.3 Marital status of the labour force

Number of now-married females in the labour force

2.4 Number of jobs

Total number of employed males
Number of males with two or more jobs

3. Occupation

3.1 Occupational distribution (by categories) of the employed population by sex.

4. Income

4.1 Family income

Total number of families in private dwellings
Number of families with annual incomes $7 000 or less

4.2 Pensions or social security benefits received

Total number of males and females receiving pensions
Receiving unemployment benefits
Not receiving pensions

5. Education

5.1 Age left school

Number of males and females who have left or never attended school
Who left school at 14 years of age or less

5.2 Qualifications - highest level obtained

Number of males and females with no qualifications
With qualifications not known

6. Housing

6.1 Nature of occupancy

Total number of occupied private dwellings

6.2 Weekly rent

Total number of rented occupied private dwellings

6.3 Structure of building

Number of separate houses

6.4 Reason private dwelling unoccupied

Number for sale
Number of unoccupied private dwellings

7. Geographic distribution of the population

7.1 Urban centres and bounded localities with 200 or more persons

List the names of all population centres in the study area with a population of 200 or more and give the male and female population for 1971 and 1976.

Part C: Educational Provision

1. Enrolment 1971 and 1978

   List, for government schools only, the primary, secondary and post-secondary enrolments for both the study area and the State at

   1 August 1971
   1 August 1978

2. Predicted Enrolments

   List the predicted enrolments in the primary, secondary and post-secondary schools for both the study area and the State in

   1979
   1980
   1881

3. Indicate the extent to which the following provisions are avialable within the study area:

   pre-school education
   education at Year 12 level
   further education (including universities and CAEs).

4. If no provision is made for further education within the study area, can students continue to reside in the study area while enrolled at an institute for further education?

APPENDIX B: SURVEY OF POTENTIAL SCHOOL LEAVERS

Please answer all questions.

Please circle the number which applies to you or write the answer, in block capitals, in the space provided.

n = 1371
Outer Wheatbelt n = 481
South-West n = 549
Pilbara n = 341

1. Name Surname _____

Christian Names(s) _____

2. Your Home Address _____

_____

State _____ Post Code _____

3. School _____

4. Sex		n	%
	Male	675	49.2
	Female	696	50.8

5. How old are you?		n	%
	13 years or less	39	2.8
	14 years	487	35.5
	15 years	510	37.2
	16 years	248	18.1
	17 years or more	87	6.3

6. Where do you live during the school term?

	n	%
At home	1267	92.4
Other (please specify)	104	7.6

7. How do you usually get to school?

	n	%
School bus	431	31.4
Car	137	10.0
Public transport	1	0.1
Bicycle/walk	706	58.1

8. About how much time does it take you to get to school and back home again each day?
(Please make sure that you give your total daily travelling time.)

	n	%
Less than half an hour	828	60.4
Half to one hour	292	21.3
Between one and two hours	168	12.3
Between two and three hours	74	5.4
More than three hours	7	0.5
No response	2	0.1

9. Please tell us (in numbers) how many brothers and sisters you have:

I have ____ older brothers and ____ older sisters
I have ____ younger brothers and ____ younger sisters

10. In which country were you born?

	n.	%		n	%		n.	%
Australia	1135	82.8	Holland	5	0.4	North America	4	0.3
United Kingdom	144	10.5	Italy	3	0.2	Other	71	5.1

11. If you were not born in Australia, how many years have you lived in Australia?

	n.	%
5 yrs or less	60	4.4
6-10 years	124	9.0
11-15 years	63	4.7
16 years or more	1	0.1
N/A (born in Australia)	1123	82.0

12. Do your parents always use English to talk to each other at home?

	n.	%
Yes	1211	88.3
No	104	7.6
No response	56	4.1

What other language do they use?

	n.	%		n.	%
Dutch	13	0.9	Greek	1	0.1
German	7	0.5	Asian	1	0.1
Italian	37	2.7	Other	47	3.4

13. Is your father (or step-father) working at present?

	n.	%
Yes. He works full-time	1266	92.3
Yes. He works part-time	28	2.0
No. He is unemployed	15	1.1
No. He is retired or on a pension	29	2.1
I do not have a father (or step-father)	29	2.1
No response	4	0.3

14. What is the name of his job? (If he is unemployed, tell us the name of his usual job.)

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	15	1.1	Craftsmen/Foremen	188	13.7
Graziers	191	13.9	Shop assistants	20	1.5
Lower professional	52	3.8	Factory workers	98	7.1
Managerial	75	5.5	Drivers	131	9.6
Self employed	9	0.7	Personal,domestic	33	2.4
Farmers	145	10.6	Miners	108	7.9
Clerical	55	4.0	Farm workers	65	3.7
Armed services	16	1.2	Labourers	89	6.5
			No response	76	5.5

15. Please tell us, as carefully as you can, what he does in this job:

16. Does your mother (or step-mother) usually have a paid job?

	n.	%
Yes. She works full-time	276	20.1
Yes. She works part-time	370	27.0
Yes, but at present she is unemployed	28	2.0
No. She does not have a paid job	53	47.6
I do not have a mother (or step-mother)	17	1.2
No response	27	2.0

17. What is the name of her paid job? (If she is not working at present, tell us the name of her usual job.)

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	5	0.4	Craftsmen/Foremen	8	0.6
Graziers	-	-	Shop assistants	81	5.9
Lower professional	103	7.5	Factory workers	13	0.9
Managerial	24	1.8	Drivers	21	1.5
Self employed	4	0.3	Personal,domestic	264	19.3
Farmers	4	0.3	Miners	-	-
Clerical	81	5.9	Farm workers	30	2.2
Armed services	3	0.2	Labourers	12	0.9
			No response	718	52.5

18. Please tell us, as carefully as you can, what she does in this job:

_____

19. Do you live on a farm or station?

	n.	%
Yes	418	30.5
No	932	68.0
No response	21	1.5

20. Does your family own this farm or station?

	n.	%
Yes, it belongs to my family	385	28.1
No, it is managed by members of my family	22	1.6
No, members of my family work on the property	17	1.2
No response, Not applicable	947	69.0

21. What is the major product of the farm of station?

	n.	%
Wheat or sheep	110	8.0
Beef cattle	60	4.4
Dairy cattle	13	0.9
Mixed	218	15.9
Other (please specify)	20	1.5
No response	24	1.8
Not applicable	926	67.5

22. When you finish your education, do you expect to work full-time on <u>this</u> farm or station?

	n.	%
Yes	64	4.7
No	263	19.2
Not sure	103	7.5
No response	15	1.1
Not applicable	926	67.5

23. If you answered 'no' to question 22, please tell us why you do not expect to be working on this farm or station:

	n.	%
Not a viable unit	26	1.9
No future in farming	3	0.2
Want another job	119	8.7
Do not want to farm	50	3.6
Not suitable for girls	-	-
Other	37	2.7
No response	42	3.1
Not applicable	1091	79.6

24 Which year are you in at school?

	n.	%
Year 9	559	40.9
Year 10	511	37.3
Year 11	214	15.6
Year 12	72	5.3
No response	13	0.9

25. If you have been a student at any <u>other</u> secondary school please tell us their names and towns they are in.

		n.	%
Number of schools	1	275	20.1
	2	35	2.6
	3	9	0.7
	4	3	0.2
	5	1	0.1
	6	2	0.1
No response		1046	76.3

26. When do you think you will leave school?

	n.	%
As soon as I reach the leaving age	27	2.0
As soon as I find a job	70	5.1
At the end of Year 9	13	0.9
At the end of Year 10	247	18.0
At the end of Year 11	208	15.2
At the end of Year 12	543	39.6
I am not sure	250	18.2
No response	13	0.9

27. What do you plan to do when you leave high school?

	n.	%
Get a job as soon as possible	239	17.4
Get an apprenticeship, do some other job training course	508	37.1
Continue my education at a Technical school, tertiary institution	289	21.1
I have not decided yet	246	17.9
Other (please specify)	81	5.9
No response	8	0.6

Please tell us more about your plans for further study, for job training or an apprenticeship.

_____

28. How definite are your job plans?

	n.	%
I know the job I want	808	58.9
I have not thought much about jobs yet	52	3.8
I have thought about jobs but still have no idea about the job I want	187	13.6
I am trying to decide between different kinds of jobs	310	22.6
No response	14	1.0

29. What kind of job do you expect to get when you finish your education?

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	86	6.3	Craftsmen/Foremen	248	18.1
Graziers	28	2.0	Shop assistants	41	3.0
Lower professional	312	22.8	Factory workers	6	0.4
Managerial	5	0.4	Drivers	11	0.8
Self employed	1	0.1	Personal,domestic	127	9.3
Farmers	44	3.2	Miners	2	0.1
Clerical	157	11.5	Farm workers	30	2.2
Armed services	75	5.5	Labourers	7	0.5
			No response	54	3.9

30. What sort of tasks do you think this work involves?

_____

31. When you chose the kind of job given in your answer to question 29 how important were the following reasons? (For each reason please circle one number).

		Very Important		Important		Not Important	
A.	The job is well paid	253	18.5	848	61.9	203	14.8
B.	My father and mother would like me to have this kind of job	161	11.7	577	42.1	565	41.2
C.	It would be hard for me to get any other sort of job near home	101	7.4	243	17.7	939	68.5
D.	My friends at school will be doing the same sort of job	9	1.7	33	2.4	1247	91.0
E.	I am sure that I would like doing this kind of job	1096	79.9	194	14.2	21	1.5
F.	It will be fairly easy for me to get this kind of job	266	19.4	656	47.8	356	26.0
G.	Someone in my family has this kind of job	82	6.0	136	9.9	1061	77.4
H.	I want the kind of job that helps other people	423	30.9	559	40.8	307	22.4

32. Which of these reasons, A to H, do you think was the most important for you?

		n.	%		n.	%		n.	%		n.	%
Reason	A	144	10.5	C	21	1.5	E	855	62.4	G	12	0.9
	B	58	4.2	D	2	0.1	F	17	1.2	H	160	11.7
										N/r	97	7.1

33. Do you think you would have a better chance of getting this kind of job if you lived in the city?

	n.	%
Yes	522	38.0
No	411	30.0
Would not make any difference	375	27.4
No response	63	4.6

34. Please give us the reasons for your answer to question 33:

_____

35. Where do you expect that you will be working when you finish your education?

	n.	%
Do not know	18	1.3
Somewhere near home	540	39.4
In some other country district	171	12.5
In a large town or city in my State	419	30.6
In another State	73	5.3
No response	50	3.6
Do not care/anywhere	100	7.3

36. Do you think that you might be unemployed after you have finished your education?

	n.	%
Very likely	93	6.8
Likely	112	8.2
Possible	770	56.2
Unlikely	260	19.0
Not at all likely	119	8.7
No response	17	1.2

37. If you expect to leave school at the end of 1978, how long will it be before you get a job?

	n.	%
This does not apply to me	758	55.3
Christmas 1978	99	7.2
The end of February 1979	57	4.2
Somewhere well into 1979	40	2.9
An indefinite period	41	3.0
I do not know	260	19.0
No response	115	8.4

38. How much would it worry you if you were unemployed?

	n.	%
It would worry me a lot	1281	88.8
It would not matter much	118	8.6
It would not worry me at all	19	1.4
No response	16	1.2

39 How good do you think your chances are of being successful in life?

	n.	%
Very good	213	15.5
Good	644	47.0
Fair	471	34.4
Not much good	25	1.8
No good at all	1	0.1
No response	17	1.2

40. Who have you talked to about choosing a job? (First responses)

	n.	%		n.	%
Family/Parents	792	57.8	Guidance officers	245	17.9
Friends	21	1.5	C.E.S.	28	2.0
Teachers	59	4.3	Others	-	-
Employers	32	2.3	Self/No one	115	8.4
			No response	79	5.8

41. Who gave you the most helpful advice about choosing a job? (First responses)

	n.	%		n.	%
Family/Parents	642	46.8	Guidance officers	158	11.5
Friends	28	2.0	C.E.S.	24	1.8
Teachers	64	4.7	Others	5	0.4
Employers	70	5.1	Self/No one	240	17.5
			No response	140	10.2

42. If you would choose any kind of job at all, what job would you most <u>like</u> to have?

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	121	8.8	Shop assistants	27	2.0
Graziers	30	2.2	Factory workers	6	0.4
Lower professional	317	23.1	Drivers	22	1.6
Managerial	30	2.2	Personal,domestic	164	12.0
Self employed	-	-	Miners	4	0.3
Farmers	41	3.0	Farm workers	32	2.3
Clerical	110	8.0	Labourers	2	0.1
Armed services	67	4.9	No response	67	4.9
Craftsmen/Foremen	225	16.4	Don't know	40	2.0
			Not applicable	66	4.8

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43. If you could choose, where would you most like to work when you settle down?

	n.	%
Somewhere near home	613	44.7
In some other country district	214	15.6
In a large town or city in my State	295	21.5
In another State	122	8.9
No response	42	3.1
Anywhere	75	5.5
Other	10	0.7

44. What things do you like about your home town or district? (First responses)

	n.	%		n.	%
Environment	461	33.6	Economic	21	1.5
Location	7	0.5	Everything	8	0.6
Social	347	25.3	Nothing	111	8.1
Family/Friends	175	12.8	Amenities	135	9.8
			No response	106	7.7

45. What things to you dislike about your home town or district? (First responses)

	n.	%		n.	%
Economic	89	6.5	Everything	50	3.6
Size	60	4.4	Nothing	179	13.1
Social	566	41.3	Other	155	11.3
Locational	60	4.4	Environmental	70	5.1
			No response	142	10.4

46. What are the really important things you would like to do in the next five years?

	n.	%		n.	%
Get a job	449	32.7	Buy house/car	30	2.2
Travel	180	13.1	Complete education	482	35.2
Save/make money	25	1.8	Other	42	3.1
Marry/new friends	47	3.4	Don't know	20	1.5
			No response	96	7.0

47. If somebody asked you, 'Do you live in the country'? what would your answer be?

	n.	%
Yes	1219	88.9
Yes/No	41	3.0
No	58	4.2
No response	53	3.0

Additional Comments

	n.	%
Positive	512	37.3
Negative	53	3.9
Defensive	77	5.6
No comment	729	53.2

APPENDIX C: SURVEY OF SCHOOL LEAVERS

n = 256

Please answer all questions that apply to you. Answer by putting a tick in the box that applies to you or by writing in the space provided.

Before starting the questionnaire please write the date on which you filled it in.

Date: / /1979

_____

Name

Address

_____

1. If your address is now different from the one above, please write your new address in the space below.

_____

Why have you changed your address?

	n.	%
My family moved	20	7.8
To get a job	18	7.0
To continue my education	36	14.1
To get a place of my own	5	2.0
Not applicable	177	72.2

2. Are you now married?

	n.	%
Yes	1	0.4
No	255	99.6

If yes, and your surname has changed, please write your new name in the space below.

_____

3. What is your racial origin?
Please tick ONE box only.

	n.	%		n.	%
European	216	84.4	Aboriginal	1	0.4
Torres Strait Is.	-	-	Pacific Is.	1	0.4
Other	33	12.9	No response	5	2.0

4. Are you at present doing any course of study?

	n.	%
Yes	80	31.3
No	167	65.2
No response	9	2.0

IF NO PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 9

5. What is your course of study?

Course	n.	%	Course	n.	%
Social Science	5	2.0	T.A.E.	15	5.9
Nursing	4	1.6	Teaching	6	2.3
Science	13	5.1	Commerce	11	4.3
Mechanics	10	3.9	Other	12	4.7
			N/A, N/R	180	70.4

6. What is the full name of your educational institution?

Institution	n.	%	Institution	n.	%
Tech. School	13	5.1	Tertiary inst.	24	9.4
Govt. School (urban)	13	5.1	Business coll.	3	1.2
Govt. School (rural)	12	4.7	Correspondence	7	2.7
Armed Services	5	2.0	Not applicable	175	68.4
			No response	4	1.6

7. When do you expect to finish this course?

_____

8. Is this a full-time course?

	n.	%
Yes	62	24.2
No	22	8.6
No response	3	1.2
Not applicable	169	66.0

****

If you answered YES to question 8 this completes your part of the questionnaire. Thank you for your help.

If you answered NO to question 8, please continue on to the next question.

9. Why did you decide not to go on with full-time education?

	Yes	
	n.	%
Did not like school or studying	45	17.6
Wanted to make money	59	23.0
Had a job lined up	85	33.2
None of my friends were going on	6	2.3
Parents could not afford it	13	5.1
I did not think I was good enough	42	16.4
Parents wanted me to leave	5	2.0

10. Do you think that at some time in the future you might go back to full-time education?

	n.	%
Very likely	11	4.3
Likely	18	7.0
Not likely	64	25.0
Very unlikely	57	22.3
Do not know	35	13.7
No response	71	27.7

11. How many jobs have you applied for since leaving school?

	n.	%		n.	%		n.	%
0	81	31.6	3	17	6.6	6	7	2.7
1	73	28.5	4	16	6.3	7	5	2.0
2	34	13.3	5	8	3.1	8	1	0.4
						10	10	4.0

12. How many jobs have you had since leaving school?

Number of full-time jobs

	n.	%		n.	%
0	130	50.8	3	1	0.4
1	109	42.6	10	1	0.4
2	15	5.9			

Number of part-time jobs

	n.	%		n.	%
0	185	72.3	4	2	0.8
1	44	17.2	6	2	0.8
2	12	4.7	8	1	0.4
3	9	3.5	10	1	0.4

13. When you were looking for a job, did you find that the advice given to you at school about careers and jobs was

	n.	%
Very useful	33	12.9
Of some use	94	36.7
Of no use at all	58	22.7
No response	71	27.3

14. Were you given any useful advice at school on how to cope with unemployment? (e.g. what to expect, how to contact helpful organizations).

	n.	%
Yes	105	41.0
No	79	30.9
No response	72	28.1

15. Do you think that more time should be spent at school preparing students for work?

	n.	%
Yes	158	61.7
No	29	11.3
No response	69	27.0

16. Do you have a job now?

	n.	%
Yes	145	56.6
No	43	16.8
No response	68	26.6

If YES, please go to questions on the pink sheet
If NO, please go to questions on the green sheet

If you have a job now, please answer all the questions on the pink pages.

17. Are you employed?

	n.	%
Full-time	135	52.7
Part-time	20	7.8
No response/Not applicable	101	39.5

18. Are you

	n.	%
An apprentice	44	17.2
On a Government training scheme (e.g. NEAT, SYETP)	1	0.4
On a job training course	8	3.1
Doing none of these	100	39.1
No response	103	40.2

19. What is the name of your job?

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Lower professional	3	1.2	Factory workers	7	2.7
Managerial	1	0.4	Driver	1	0.4
Self employed	1	0.4	Personal,domestic	15	5.9
Farmer	3	1.2	Miner	1	0.4
Clerical	27	10.5	Farm worker	15	5.9
Craftsmen/Foremen	36	14.1	Labourer	13	5.1
Shop assistant	30	11.7	No response	103	40.2

20. Is your job permanent?

	n.	%
Yes	128	50.0
No	26	10.2
No response	102	39.8

If NO please explain why.

Reason	n.	%	Reason	n.	%
Nature of job	6	2.3	Poss. of redundancy	6	2.3
Not enough work	1	0.4	On a training scheme	3	1.2
Trial for perm. job	5	2.0	Not applicable	127	49.6
Casual work	6	2.3	No response	101	39.5

21. Where is your place of work? (What town or district)

	n.	%
Home town of district	134	52.3
Nearby town or district	1	4.3
Large city or town in the State	8	3.1
Interstate	1	0.4
No response	102	39.9

22. Do you work on your family farm or station?

	n.	%
Yes	17	6.6
No	133	52.0
No response	106	41.4

23. How long have you been in your job?

	n.	%
Less than a month	11	4.3
1-2 months	18	7.0
2-3 months	17	6.6
3-4 months	37	14.5
More than 4 months	69	27.0
No response	104	40.6

24. How did you get your job? (Tick the box which best applies)

	n.	%
Through CES or other Government agency	9	3.5
Through an employment agency	3	1.2
By responding to an advertisement in the paper	25	9.8
Through relatives or friends	40	15.6
By contacting place of employment myself	66	25.8
Through the school	6	2.3
No response	107	41.8

25. When you chose your job, how important were each of the following reasons? (For each reason put a tick in one box). The 'no response' numbers for each alternative are not shown.

		Very Important		Important		Not Important	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1.	The job is well paid	24	9.4	82	32.0	43	16.8
2.	My father and mother wanted me to have this kind of job	11	4.3	30	11.7	106	41.4
3.	It was hard for me to get any other sort of job near home	28	10.9	40	15.6	80	31.3
4.	My friends at school are doing the same kind of job	-	-	2	0.8	144	56.3
5.	I like doing this kind of job	92	35.9	51	19.9	8	3.1
6.	It was fairly easy for me to get this kind of job	31	12.1	57	22.3	61	23.8
7.	Someone in my family has this kind of job	11	4.3	11	4.3	125	48.8
8.	I wanted the kind of job that helps other people	29	22.3	55	21.5	60	23.4

26. Which one of the reasons do you think was the most important for you?

Reason	n.	%	Reason	n.	%
1	12	4.7	5	94	36.7
2	8	3.1	6	8	3.1
3	19	7.4	7	-	-
4	-	-	8	9	3.5
			N/R	106	41.4

27. How much do you like your job?

	n.	%
Very much	79	30.9
Quite a lot	61	23.8
Not much	11	4.3
Not at all	1	0.4
No response	104	40.6

Tell us what you do like and what you do not like about your job.

Likes most commonly listed	Dislikes most commonly listed
1. Nature of work	1. Nature of work
2. Working conditions	2. Working conditions
3. Fellow workers	3. Bosses

28. Do you think you will be in this job in 12 months time?

	n.	%
Yes	125	48.8
No	27	10.5
No response	104	40.6

29. How do you usually get to work?

	n.	%
Own car or motocycle	23	9.0
Public transport	6	2.3
Bicycle or walk	54	21.1
Regular lift	42	16.4
I work at home	12	4.7
Other	18	7.0
No response	101	39.5

30. How long does it take you to get to work and back home each day? (Please make sure that you give your total daily travelling time.)

	n.	%
Less than half an hour	127	49.6
Half to one hour	21	8.2
Between one and two hours	6	2.3
Between two and three hours	-	-
More than three hours	1	0.4
No response	101	39.5

31. If you could choose any kind of job at all, what job would you most like to have?

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	12	4.7	Craftsmen/Foremen	35	13.7
Graziers	-	-	Shop assistants	8	3.1
Lower professional	28	10.9	Factory workers	3	1.2
Managerial	2	0.8	Drivers	3	1.2
Self employed	7	2.7	Personal,domestic	11	14.3
Farmers	2	0.8	Miners	1	0.4
Clerical	11	4.3	Farm workers	16	6.3
Armed services	5	2.0	Labourers	2	0.8
			No response	110	43.0

Same as job in Q.19? (i.e. job presently held)

	n.	%
Yes	73	28.5
No	69	27.0
No response	114	44.5

32. What could you do to improve your chances of getting this job?

Return to school	49 mentions
Get more experience	34 "
More education (higher level)	32 "
Nothing	25 "
Look harder	8 "
Move from area	6 "
Study on own	3 "

This completes your questionnaire. Thank you for your help.

If you are unemployed at present, please answer all the questions on the green pages.

33. How long have you been unemployed?

	n.	%
Under 2 weeks	4	1.6
2 weeks and under 4 weeks	2	0.8
4 weeks and under 8 weeks	6	2.3
8 weeks and under 13 weeks	6	2.3
13 weeks and under 26 weeks	15	5.9
26 weeks and over	9	3.5
No response, N/A	214	83.6

34. Are you looking for a job right now?

	n.	%
Yes	37	14.5
No	5	2.0
No response, N/A	214	83.6

If yes, what sort of job are you looking for?

Category	n.	%	Category	n.	%
Upper professional	1	0.4	Craftsmen/Foremen	7	2.7
Lower professional	1	0.4	Personal,domestic	2	0.8
Clerical	10	3.9	Farm worker	2	0.8
Armed services	2	0.8	Labourer	10	3.9
			No response-N/A	220	86.0

35. When did you last apply for a job?

	n.	%
Within the last 2 weeks	17	6.6
2 weeks to 4 weeks ago	24	5.5
4 weeks to 8 weeks ago	2	0.8
8 weeks to 13 weeks ago	4	1.6
More than 13 weeks ago	4	1.6
No response, Not applicable	215	84.0

36. How often do you do each of the following? (Put a tick in one box on each line.) The 'no response' numbers for each alternative are not shown.

Go to the Commonwealth Employment Service

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
14	5.5%	15	5.9%	9	3.5%	3	1.2%

Go to centres for unemployed people

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
33	12.9%	4	1.6%	2	0.8%	1	0.4%

Work at home around house or garden etc.

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
1	0.4%	9	3.5%	1	0.4%	31	12.1%

Work voluntarily in the community (e.g. looking after children, helping pensioners etc.)

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
21	8.2%	17	6.6%	-	-	1	0.4%

Do odd jobs for money (e.g. baby sitting, gardening, house cleaning)

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
12	4.7%	24	9.4%	3	1.2%	2	0.8%

Hang around with friends

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
7	2.7%	17	6.6%	4	1.6%	12	4.7%

Go looking for jobs

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
2	0.8%	20	7.8%	8	3.1%	11	4.3%

Watch TV

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
2	0.8%	22	8.6%	-	-	17	6.6%

Attend courses or programs designed to improve your chances of getting a job

Never		Occasionally		Once a week		Daily	
23	13.7%	3	1.2%	-	-	3	1.2%

37. How does your family feel about your situation? Pick out one of the following which most closely describes their attitude towards you.

	n.	%
Supportive/sympathetic	26	10.2
Tolerant	7	2.7
Critical	1	0.4
Anxious over money	1	0.4
Angry	4	1.6
Do not care	1	0.4
No response, Not applicable	216	84.4

38. Are you receiving unemployment benefits?

	n.	%
Yes	28	10.9
No, but have applied for benefits	6	2.3
No and have not applied for benefits	8	3.1
No response, Not applicable	214	83.6

39. How long do you think you might be unemployed?

	n.	%
For a few months	22	8.6
For much of the year	11	4.3
Indefinitely	7	2.7
No response, N/A	216	84.4

40. How much does being unemployed worry you?

	n.	%
It worries me a lot	34	13.3
It does not matter much	6	2.3
It does not worry me at all	1	0.4
No response, Not applicable	216	84.0

41. What could you do to improve your chances of getting a job?

Return to school	11 mentions
Move from area	8 "
Get more experience	8 "
Look harder	8 "
Nothing	5 "
More education (higher level)	5 "
Study on own	1 "

42. What should the government do to help unemployed young people while there are not enough jobs available?

Create more jobs through economic policies	13	suggestions
Exclude married women from workforce	11	"
Provide activities for the young	10	"
Provide training schemes	7	"
Increase unemployment benefits	5	"
Retire people earlier	2	"
Subsidize employers of the young	2	"

This completes your questionnaire. Thank you for your help.

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